LETTERS TO

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

I

Bombay
July 8, 1921

*Bhai Shri Vallabhbhai,

I reach Ahmedabad on Monday [11th] and leave it the same day. Please have a look at my letter to Bhai Indulal [Yajnik, Secretary, Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee] as regards the action which the Committee should take. I hope it will decide to non-cooperate. Total boycott of legislatures is our only help.

Please inform Bhai Mavlankar and others.

† Vande Mataram from Mohandas

II

[1921]

It seems some differences have arisen between ‡Gidwani and ‡Kakasaheb Kalelkar. Please bring them together and iron out things.

Please see Anasuyabehn [Sarabhai] and give her a cheque [on account of aid to the Trade Union schools].

Please tell §Manibehn or §Dahyabhai that I had again long talks with §Vitthalbhai. He has now some slight realization of the importance of the spinning-wheel. But legislatures seem to me to be his appropriate

* The salutation sometimes was 'Bhai Shri 5 Vallabhbhai', but later on mostly 'Bhai Vallabhbhai', which was changed into 'Chi. (Chiranjivi) Vallabhbhai' in letter CCLXI and onwards.

† Changed from 1924 onwards to 'Bapu' or 'Blessings from Bapu.'

‡ Principal and professor in the National College, Ahmedabad.

§ The Sardar's daughter, son and elder brother respectively.

field of action. He cannot mix with and thus serve the people. Not that he would not like to do it, but he has not cultivated the gift for it, as for instance he has cultivated the gift for work in councils. I think each of these two lines calls for different qualifications.

III

(A) Telegram

Sylhet, Assam
August 30, 1921

Event* coming. Have Gujarat day's *hartal*, labourers joining after leave. Wednesday Thursday Chittagong. Saturday Barisal. Sunday and after Calcutta.

(B) Letter

If we have the necessary strength, I suggest that so long as the Prince is in Ahmedabad, there should be a continuous *hartal*, care being taken that in spite of the suspension of business poor people get whatever provisions they want. In the event of such a *hartal* being observed, martial law is likely to be proclaimed. We should stand up to it and face shootings to kill. But I do not think we are still ready for such drastic action. We should therefore rest content with what we can do. We must issue instructions as to how the people should dissociate themselves from the visit. The Municipality should have as little to do with it as possible. No one will salute the Prince. If he visits even Government schools, the boys will not rise from their seats. If we are strong enough for such action, we must also organize picketing at the gate of his residence and prevent people from seeing him. In fact we can think

* Reference to the impending visit of the Prince of Wales.

out quite a number of ways in which to show our displeasure without being discourteous. All these we should adopt, and make our position crystal clear. I would advise early announcement of the full boycott programme and training the people to act peacefully but firmly. We must have the power to demonstrate that the Prince cannot have his own way in the City.

More than this I cannot say from such a distance. In any case do not undertake anything beyond your capacity. It is essential to avoid failure. If there is possibility of a breach of the peace following our demonstrations, please do not make any attempt to carry out my suggestions.

It is in the fitness of things that you have accepted the Chairmanship of the Congress Reception Committee. Such honours will not turn our heads if service of the people is our only objective in life.

IV

Sylhet, Assam
August 30, 1921

We came here from Silchar yesterday morning by special train. We leave here for Chittagong at 4 p. m. today. The people here are very backward. There is also a dearth of workers. We have still to tour the tea plantations where the workers are on strike. We are not sure when we shall reach Calcutta, though we imagine we should be there in the evening on September 4.

Some Marvadi cloth merchants here have signed the pledge to boycott foreign cloth. Time alone can show whether they can be depended upon to redeem it.

Jamnadas [Khushalchand Gandhi]

V

Day of Silence
[September 5, 1921]
148 Russa Road, Calcutta

I will write a note for *Young India* about visitors at the Ahmedabad Congress session.

I am anxious to reach there. But work makes my presence here necessary. Rajagopalachari wires from Madras that I must not leave Calcutta before I hear from him again. And then the work before me is not likely to be finished before the 12th.

The Swadeshi movement has slackened in Bengal. Quite a number of spinning-wheels are being plied, but the yarn is not properly accounted for; nor is weaving attended to as it ought to be.

Civil disobedience should be postponed at least during this month. Let there be as much picketing as possible in terms of the Delhi Resolution. If civil resistance is once inaugurated, it should be carried to the bitter end. I should like to discuss the matter with co-workers before I make up my mind. It is enough if for the present we concentrate on Swadeshi including both the boycott of foreign cloth and the production of Khadi.

Please take care of your health, as there are heaps of work before us to be disposed of before December. The country's face is bound to undergo a change. Whether the change is or is not for the better is in the hands of God or perhaps in our own.

The Viceroy's speech has only stiffened my attitude. If the Prince is not coming for political reasons, why is he coming at all and at whose expense? But we need not worry about it at present.

VI

Bhadrapad vadi 3
[September 16, 1924]

I am sure you are already aware of my decision [to fast for 21 days for Hindu-Muslim unity from the 17th]. You have the heart of a lion; you will not therefore be perturbed at all. On the other hand you will work all the harder for the common cause. Please see that Manibehn is not nervous. I am not writing to her separately.

VII

September 26, 1925

I reach Bombay on the 20th. I take it that you go with me to Kachchha [Cutch] on the 21st. You should therefore be in Bombay on the 20th at the latest. I have sent Devdhar's telegram to Manibehn who, he says, may stay at Seva Sadan in December. If Dahyabhai is entrusted to Birlaji, it is likely that he might be put to work in their textile mill. But that would be improper. More of this when we meet. I am discussing the subject with Jamnalalji.

VIII

[January 23, 1927]

Bhai Amritlal Thakkar will perhaps refuse to accept the presidentship of the Kathiavad political conference. The very adjective 'political' is unpleasant to him, though he will not have to say anything about politics. I feel that in any conference of Indian state subjects at present politics has no place at all, and that it should devote all its attention to the spinning-wheel. If Amritlal says No, I wonder if you could accept the presidentship yourself. I believe your views on the subject are almost the same as mine. But if there is disagreement between us, you are free to refuse to shoulder this burden. You must not refuse simply on the ground that it will add to the burden you are already carrying, for I am sure it is quite possible to make the addition as light as you wish.

You please address the reply to Jamooee (Bihar) where we expect to pass part of a day, on which we have to do two other places as well.

On Friday we shall be in Arrah, reaching Patna on Sunday. On Monday evening we leave Patna for Gondia via Calcutta, reaching Gondia on Wednesday.

Manibehn has no intention to marry for the present at any rate. We must support her to maintain this attitude. You please cease to worry about it and leave it to me. I am arranging to send her to Karachi. She is willing to go there. The climate of Karachi will agree with her and she will be able to do fine work.

[The first 8 letters were sent to the Sardar at Ahmedabad.]

IX

Satyagraha Ashram,
Sabarmati
June 3, 1928

Herewith draft of the letter to be sent to the Governor. The battle in Bardoli is going on very well. Long live the Sardar to fight many a good fight. Write or wire if I am wanted. There are persistent rumours of your impending arrest. The arrest, if it comes off, will be a rest cure. If it does not, rest is for us forbidden fruit.

[IX, X and XI were sent to Bardoli.]

X

Sabarmati
July 24, 1928

I think we should make a very brief statement as a reply to the Governor's speech, in which he has tried hard to mislead the public. A long reply would be harmful to the cause; I therefore send a short one. I wrote an article on the subject for *Young India* yesterday; I have found that there is no need to change any part of it or to write anything fresh in the light of the Governor's speech. A statement from you issued from Bardoli will suffice for the present. If anything further is needed, we shall see to it next week. But the next two weeks are a very critical period, during which no such word should be uttered on our side as is likely to impede a settlement. You please come over to Ahmedabad if your presence in Bardoli is not necessary; or if you wish, I will join you there. The decision on this point has to be yours, for you are the man on the spot while I am ignorant of the local conditions.

XI

Sabarmati
July 31, 1928

I have your letter. I was expecting today a wire calling me there and therefore had held myself in readiness.

There is not much to write as Bhai Nariman and Haribhai are expected here. The line that we must take is perfectly obvious. We can give up neither the *talatis* [village accountants] nor the lands. The Committee's enquiry must be comprehensive; we cannot afford to let its scope be restricted in any way. We may agree to the appointment of Kaye and Davis if you think fit. Please wire the date on which you would expect me there.

Manibehn came to see me. She seems to be very much pulled down. It was indeed quite necessary to send her down here. For the present she will live in the city [Ahmedabad]. She says she will come to the Ashram on the fifth.

PS. Nariman and Haribhai came and had a talk with me. I think you should go if you receive a call through the members of the Legislature. The conditions for agreement are as we have drafted them.

XII

London
October 26, 1931

There is no time at all to write letters. Even this I am writing as a sitting of the Federal Committee [of the Round Table Conference] is in progress. You must take suitable treatment for the trouble in your nose at

the earliest opportunity. Most of my work here is done outside the Conference. Although its value for the present is not much, I am inclined to think that it will turn out to be very useful later on. There is little hope of my mission being crowned with success. But I will surely see that our honour is not compromised. I have met many who hold responsible positions.

The deliberations of the Conference will be over in the middle of November. I have been invited to visit almost all the countries on the Continent, and wish to see them all. If I am able to go there, it is likely to be serviceable to our cause. You please see all friends and wire your decision to me. If you agree that I should go, I shall be away from home for a month longer, so that I can be back only in January. At this point I was overcome by sleep in my chair; you will see that the pen is refusing to move. You should give me a month if you can. At home you do as you like. You must have seen my reply to Jawaharlal's wire. No matter what happens here, if at home you find that you should offer a fight, offer it by all means. Nothing at present can here be done as regards our local problems. For instance I had expected to do something about the Bengal detenus, but I never had a suitable opportunity to make a move in the matter. I cannot say if something can be done after the British elections.

I notice that the authorities in Gujarat are not behaving themselves. You may certainly resist all wrong decisions made by them. The letter about returning the confiscated lands in Ras is simply impertinent. However we shall certainly succeed in tackling all that in the end.

Now this is a longish letter, isn't it?

[This was sent to the Sardar at Bombay.]

XIII

May 9, 1933

I passed a good night. This place [Parnakuti] is more airy and much cooler than the prison. I slept in the open. Here there is more work to do. But that will be for two days only. After that I have decided to stop working altogether. I do not feel any particular weakness just yet. Don't worry at all. Your loving care of me was as tender as that of a mother.

[Written to the Sardar in Yeravda prison on the second day of the 21 days' fast for self-purification.]

XIV

Sunday
[*Circa* July 1933]

I had to stop writing with my own hand soon after my last letter to you, as I saw that I had not the necessary physical strength for the purpose. I am now inclined to try to find out if I am strong enough. And how can I try better than by writing to you?

Please do not give way to worry on account of doctors' reports and the long period of convalescence. His will be done. I had expected to be on my feet in three weeks, but that was not to be. However there is no ground for anxiety. It will take some time for me to get well; that is all. And no wonder, as you know I am in my 64th year. Rest assured that I am happy. I am having a bath in the sea that is Premlilabehn Thakarsi's affection. I have converted her house into a *dharmashala* [hospice]. She took charge of all the arrangements for

Devadas's wedding and was deeply interested in solemnizing it. God's mercy knows no bounds. But do we deserve it? God help us to make ourselves fit for it.

What about your nose? I have made all arrangements for Ramabehn Joshi's operation.

I have written so much and yet I do not feel any fatigue. Still I will leave well alone and not write any more letters today.

[This was sent to Yeravda prison. The Sardar had cauterization performed on January 3, 1932 and he was arrested and taken to Yeravda with Gandhiji in an open car the very next day, with the result that the trouble in his nose got worse in the cold weather and gave him constant trouble all the time that he was in prison. Sometimes he had not a wink of sleep all night. He was advised to undergo an operation of deflected septum. But as it was impossible to have it performed by doctors of his own choice, he did nothing about it himself and left the trouble to be dealt with by the Government as they thought fit.]

XV

August 24, 1933

Not that I am too feeble to write with my own hand, but today at any rate I am dictating this letter. You must be reading newspapers and so are probably aware of recent events. It seems as if they occurred as in a dream. But we must accept in thankfulness everything that God has in store for us. 'One step enough for me.' So we shall be careful of nothing. But this time I somehow do not see my way clear before me. In Yeravda prison I was thinking of you all the while, as I had

never expected that you would be removed to Nasik the day before I was taken there. We remembered you every day on various occasions and keenly felt our inability to consult you on the questions that arose.*

Please let me know if you need any books or other things.

I am being well looked after and hope to recover normal strength very soon. I can now sit up in bed without assistance. I took some fruit and lettuce soup today. Dr Gilder and Dr Patel examined me and found nothing wrong. So please do not worry about me. What about your nose? Do write whatever you are permitted to write. I am in Parnakuti for a few days, and shall then go to Bombay. In Bombay too I will stay for some days. After that goodness knows where I shall be.

[Letters XV to LVII were sent to Nasik prison.]

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* When Gandhiji was released on May 8, 1933, he advised the Congress President to suspend the civil disobedience movement for six weeks. Later on at a conference of workers in Poona it was decided to limit the movement to individuals only. Satyagrahi peasants had to leave hearth and home during the movement. Gandhiji therefore felt that the inmates of the Ashram at Sabarmati should do the same. He therefore invited the Government to occupy the vacated Ashram and declared that he would lead a batch of Ashramites in a march from Sabarmati to Ras in Kheda District on August 1, 1933. He was therefore arrested on August 2, and brought to Yeravda prison, where he was shocked to find that the Sardar had been removed to Nasik prison the previous day. He was then released for a day on parole, and then rearrested and sentenced to one year's imprisonment for breach of parole. As a convicted prisoner he was now prevented from editing the *Harijan* papers and conducting the Harijan movement. He therefore went on fast on August 16; the fast was to continue until he was permitted to render Harijan service in prison as before. On August 20 he was taken to Sassoon Hospital, Poona and released on the 23rd. This letter was written the very next day.

XVI

On the Poona-Bombay train
September 15, 1933

Your letter was received in the train and I shall now write the reply as I am on my way to Bombay. I shall go to Ahmedabad on Wednesday. You must have read about the *two ceremonies to be performed there on Thursday. I hope to reach Wardha on the 23rd. What is to be done next will be decided there.

You should not worry at all about my health. I am taking good care of myself and will continue to do so. I am now able to take two pounds of milk, vegetables and fruit. My weight is one hundred pounds. I am being massaged every day. Dr Dinshah who looks after me diligently is also coming to Bombay. Premlilabehn showered great affection on me. I now feel perfectly at home in 'Parnakuti.' I was pleased to learn that you have continued to take honey. Shall I ask her to send you some? She is coming to Bombay tomorrow. Auntie [Shrimati Sarojini Naidu] was there throughout. She is a wonderful mixture of affection and other things, and prone to create difficulties. Jawaharlal is keeping excellent health. He is a jewel in fact as well as in name. Andrews came to Poona and spent two days in peace and quiet. . . . Chandrashankar will very probably come with me on tour. There was a long letter from Mahadev. He is pretty well and keeps reading and spinning. Ba is all right. Do get your teeth set right. How is your study of Sanskrit?

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* Laying the foundation-stone of the Maneklal Jethalal Library building and unveiling the statue of Shri Chinubhai Madhavlal.

Have no worry on any account. I wrote to Mani asking her to come and meet me wherever I am after she has seen you on being released from prison. Kamala Nehru is still in Lucknow ailing from heart trouble.

What does it matter if one has companions in prison or not? If one is conscious of the living presence of God, why should he need any other company? . . .

I have to draw up an itinerary for the Harijan tour in consultation with Ghanshyamdas [Birla] and Thakkarbapa . . . .

Do write and ask for anything you want. The manufacture of envelopes* was taken over by Mahadev.

XVII

Wardha
September 24, 1933

. . . . Ba, Mirabehn, Chandrashankar, Prabhudas, Nair, Anandi, Nirmala (Mahadev's sister) Sharada (Chimanlal's daughter) and Prabhavati are with me. So is Brajkishan . . . . Neelanagini and Amala [Miss Margaret Spiegel] are quite a problem. Nagini is unstable. Amala is stupid and cannot do anything right. The presence of both is a burden. I shall try and lighten it if I can. Duncan [Greenlees] and Mary Barr are doing excellent work. Both are hard-working and honest. . . .

Mani arrived on the day I was to leave Bombay and was with me for a long time. I took her with me when I went to see [Verrier] Elwin. I suggested to her that she should come to me after she has met you and also has had her eyes and teeth examined.

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* See *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Navajivan, Vol. I, p. 9.

Anandi, other girls and Kureshi's children are now in Anasuyabehn's hostel for Harijans. I felt that this was as it should be. Narandas' Purushottam is engaged to the daughter of Harakhchandbhai. What I do not like about it is that both are of the same caste; but the girl is good, I am told, and Narandas has given his consent.

Even if you finish the Gita, you will have made considerable progress in Sanskrit. . . .

Jawaharlal's sister Krishnakumari will probably be betrothed to Kasturbhai's nephew who has just returned from England as a barrister.

I have already met Kasturbhai, his sister and her son. The original choice was made by the two themselves, after they had met twice or thrice at the Raos' in Bombay. Sarooprani has consented and the wedding should follow shortly. When this comes off, it will take a load off Sarooprani's mind.

I am fairly well. I cannot say whether I have high blood pressure here. There is no doctor here who could express a definite opinion on that point; and none such is needed either. I take a pound of milk now, and boiled vegetable such as white pumpkin and *turiyan* twice a day. My weight was 99 pounds when I arrived here. I shall weigh myself again in a few days. Ba is all right; so also Mira. . . .

I propose to stay and take rest here until October 15.

As the Government has not taken charge of Satyagraha Ashram, it is being converted into a permanent settlement for Harijans. Jamnalalji as well as friends in Ahmedabad like the idea. Besides the residential colony

there will be a tannery, a Harijan students' hostel and the office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The land and buildings will be handed over to the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh. Do write if you have anything to say about it.

Don't you agree that this is a long letter?

XVIII

Wardha
September 30, 1933

A letter from Mani was received yesterday. She appears to have an enlarged spleen and is taking some treatment for it. So it will be some time before she arrives here. . . .

I hope Doctor Chandulal [Desai] is all right.

XIX

Wardha
October 3, 1933

. . . . You will see my letter about the Ashram in the newspapers. I shall send Totaramji if necessary. Parikshitlal will also be there. So there will be no difficulty.

I have written to Mani that she should come here only after finishing the necessary treatment. . . .

I want to get started with some other work; so I had better stop. Jamnalal is sitting by my side and asks you to stop worrying about me. If necessary I will go to a hill station. My weight at any rate has gone up to 103.

XX

Your letter was received only today. You must have seen from the papers how I am progressing. There is a reduction in my blood pressure, 160-100 and an increase in weight to 103 pounds.

Krishna Nehru's marriage with Gunottam Hathising will be celebrated in Allahabad on the 20th. I shall not be going and they do not expect me there either. I have already written a letter wishing them well and you will also tender your congratulations.

Kishorlal will arrive in two or three days.

The Harijan tour is expected to begin on November 8. Thakkarbapa, Chandrashankar, Mira, Nair and Ramnarayan Chaudhari will probably go with me.

XXI

Wardha
October 21, 1933

Your letter was received earlier. *I am already doing as you wish. I will not allow my work to interfere with my rest. I wish you could give up worrying about me. You should get a telescope even more powerful than Premlilabehn's, so that even a mustard seed would appear as big as a mountain.

Prabhudas was married on Wednesday. He has got just the type of girl he wanted and as a result of his own efforts. She is 24 years old and very simple in habits, well educated and an Arya Samajist.

* The Sardar had asked Gandhiji to take more rest.

Mahadev has written a letter to me from Belgam prison. It is as if he has composed and sent an epic poem. I enclose some extracts for your delectation.

Ba is making her own preparations for going to prison. Kishorlal and his wife left the day before. . . .

What weight do you keep at present? What can you eat? How much milk and curds? Is there anything I can send? As the proverb goes, even a mother does not give a second helping until asked, and you know what sort of 'mother' I am. The time for the morning prayers is now up; so I will close.

XXII

Wardha

October 27, 1933

Mani, *Mridu, Mridu's uncle and Babo† have been here for the last three days. Babo has become quite friendly with me this time. He is the picture of health. He joins me in playing on the Japanese monk's drum. This monk is a gem, frank, humble, cheerful and courteous. He is learning Hindi and spins on the *charkha* and the *takli*. He scrupulously observes all the Ashram rules. I have given many hours to the girls [Mani and Mridula]. Both are in great hurry, and as they travel by plane, have threatened to leave by the mail train today. Mani's leg seems to require electrical treatment. Mridula wants to go and nurse some friends of hers. Both seem to get along fairly well with each other.

* * *

Pattabhi [Sitaramayya] has arrived. I saw him for hardly ten minutes. Jamnalalji does not let any one take

* Miss Mridula Sarabhai. † The Sardar's grandson.

too much of my time. The Ahmedabad textile labour representatives were only given in all an hour and a half, and that in three instalments. Such is his strict watchmanship.

Vitthalbhai's death did, of course, cause pain, but for him it was release pure and simple. We expected that the end would probably come while he was still abroad. The medical attendance appears to have been of the best. Subhas [Chandra Bose] seems to have outdone himself by his devoted nursing. I have written to him about it and I think you also should.

Swami [Anand] will stay here for some time longer. Thakkarbapa has gone to Vrindavan in search of Nagini. His compassion is boundless. . . . Amala is working hard at present. Duncan has buried himself in his village. Mary Barr is still here. She was ill but has now quite recovered. Vinoba is doing much good work among Harijans in the villages. I hear from Devadas off and on.

Do not worry about my having undertaken the Harijan tour. I shall take good care of myself. Raja* wishes that I should do the South first.

XXIII

Wardha
October 28, 1933

There is a cable from Subhas today that Vitthalbhai's body will reach Bombay on the ninth November and that the cremation rites be performed by yourself. My reply through the press has been that I do not expect you to ask for release on parole, and so the cremation would have to be done in your absence.

* Shri C. Rajagopalachari.

Dahyabhai should perform the rites. There was no time to ask for your own views and I did not even think it proper.

This is the third day of Kaka[Kalelkar]'s fast. He is well.

XXIV

Wardha
November 1, 1933

There is an English proverb that great men think alike. As we can now be said to be great, we found ourselves in agreement as regards the impropriety of your seeking release on account of Vitthalbhai's funeral. I have already written to Dahyabhai. There is of course no question of my publishing anything as coming from you or representing your views. After telling the Major about the telegrams received by you, write some such line as this to me in your next:

> "Please convey through the newspapers my thanks to all those who have kindly sent letters and telegrams of condolence."

If he cannot allow even this and has to obtain permission from the I.-G.P., we shall have it printed when the permission is granted.

Dinabandhu [C.F. Andrews] is to come today. He has been around a lot and will ask for considerable time, which I shall not be able to refuse.

Kaka will break his fast tomorrow. He is quite well. His constitution differs from mine, and he can take large quantities of water, with salt or soda bi-carb, whether cold or hot. If only God granted me such capacity, I would be strongly tempted to beat Bhansali

at his own game, and this even if the triumph drives me crazy. He is dressed in a sacking loin-cloth suspended from a girdle of thick coir string. He lives on unfired flour mixed with water and is always on the move. On rare occasions he sends me a post card and assures me that this is real experience.

Mahadev keeps writing to me. He goes on collecting books from all over. Some time later these books will find their way into a public library; so that does not matter. I only wish he does not ruin his eyes by all this reading in jail. I do want to send him a mild prohibitory order.

Devadas appears to be making good use of his time in prison. He reads, teaches, spins and plays games.

My programme for the tour is as follows: this month in the C. P., then Delhi, Punjab, Sindh, Rajputana, the U. P., Bengal, Assam and so on. I would not be surprised if there is some change in this programme and I have to go to Madras earlier. We are to start from here on the 8th. We will have to come back later for a couple of days for touring Wardha Tehsil. . . . Rajendrababu has been taken back to hospital and I think they will keep him there now.

XXV

My difficulty is that you are not by my side. I feel this as much as you do. Therefore I imitate Ekalavya who, on being rejected by Dronacharya, learned to be an archer by keeping Drona's clay idol before himself. I do not want to be an archer. You are no archer yourself and have turned the arrow into a ploughshare. I will also be a tiller of the soil to the best of my ability.

I fashion your image every day and put my questions to it. One cannot say that the answer which is received is the correct one. But the point is that I always bear in mind what you are likely to think or do.

Preparations for Ba's departure are still on. Charlie-bhai [Andrews] went from here yesterday.

I will need your letters throughout this tour and you will also receive mine.

Kaka, Swami and others will follow Ba to prison. Morarji [R. Desai] etc. are here and in good health. Have no anxiety about me whatsoever. Your letter this time.*. . .

XXVI

Nagpur
November 9, 1933
(Before the morning prayers)

I have your letter. It will not do if you stop writing to me during this tour. I will also keep writing. All that has followed Vitthalbhai's death has not escaped my attention. There have been quite a few attacks on me but I have taken no notice of it, for what is the use? Sifting dirt only brings more to the surface. The only thing of which I took notice was Subhasbabu's devoted service.

My work began on Tuesday last. People come out in large crowds everywhere. They do not seem to be annoyed when I condemn untouchability. I opened a fine temple near Wardha [to Harijans]. In Nagpur

*This to indicate to the Sardar that part of the letter had been scored out by the jail authorities.

there was a crowd larger than ever seen before. My voice lasted out fairly well, and I was not really tired at the end of it. I have started off with a weight of about 108 pounds. The collections made so far are also satisfactory. After finishing the C.P., I have to go to Delhi and from there direct to the South. Raja says that it is essential to do the South first, for the origin of all orthodox resistance lies there. We return to Wardha on Saturday to finish off work in that Tehsil. Jawaharlal and others will also come and see me there, as [Doctor] Ansari has already seen me. I have with me Mira, Chandrashankar, Nair, Ramnath, Om* and the daughter-in-law of Rameshvardas Birla, and Thakkarbapa of course. Om has now become quite a brave girl.

Ba will leave Wardha on the 13th and should reach Ahmedabad about the 15th. She is very uneasy and unable to make up her mind. However she will go to prison; she is sure that that is the proper place for her to be in.

XXVII

Chanda
November 14, 1933

I cannot do without letters from you; it is a habit you have fostered in me. We are in Chanda. It is four p.m. now and we are to start for Savli at six.

It was only from the *Times of India* that I came to know about the egg-throwing incident at the Nagpur students' meeting. I did not see anything of the sort in the Hall. I did not notice any disturbance either. Only Chandrashankar told me that an egg did drop

* Or Uma, daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj.

near Om. No one can tell whether it was meant for her or for the ex-President seated beside me or myself. The fact is that the whole thing has been grossly exaggerated. There is no question about the affection shown by the students. They gave a purse of seven hundred rupees. I am sure the same will be the case in the U.P.

Ansari came and saw me on Sunday. His health is somewhat better. He could not meet Vitthalbhai as he wished.

I have stood the tour very well so far. It is now time to take my food and then get into the car: so that's all for today.

Ba and Swami left Wardha yesterday. Ba will go to Akola and from there to Ahmedabad.

XXVIII

Raipur
November 23, 1933

You seem really to have stopped writing. Jamnalalji's resignation* was inevitable for his own peace of mind. So also were other resignations. They have cleared the air considerably. Jamnalalji himself has been relieved of a burden and has received fresh accession of strength. I will not say more, but have no doubts regarding the propriety of this step.

I hear that there is some set-back in your health. Do let me know if there is. See if you can tell us your weight. I hope the nose is not giving you trouble. Surely you should have nothing to hide from me.

Mahadev is being sorely tried and I am glad of it. There is some difficulty about Gujarati letters. I am

* From the Congress Working Committee.

thinking of writing to the Colonel about it in spite of myself. I have stood the strain of touring fairly well. The crowds are as large as before, perhaps larger; and as crazy as ever.

XXIX

Itarsi
December 1, 1933

I am writing this in the Itarsi *dharmashala** at 3:15 a.m. Mira has just gone for a wash. When she returns, we shall offer prayers and take the train for Kareli en route to Anantpur, where Jethalal has his headquarters. We were in Betul yesterday, and after coming to Itarsi by train, we had a meeting and then slept in this rest-house.

I have received your letter. How can we deal with the lies published in the *Times of India*? Still I keep on doing what I can think of. I have now little time for reading newspapers. I for one do feel that my work for Harijans [children of God] is being looked after by Hari [God]. The same power which draws thousands to our meetings will disarm the liars. We should feel quite satisfied so long as we watch our own step.

I know your eye is on me all along. Will it not protect me from harm? Have I not observed the mother-like love you feel for me all the time I was in Yeravda? That quality of your mind can be realized in your letters. I have also seen that you follow others too with the same watchfulness.

* Charitable rest-house.

Don't worry about me or about what goes on at present. This is God's own work; 'Who, except Him, can set right things that have gone wrong?' *

We are in the train now. I hope you will do the needful about your nose.

XXX

Jabalpur
December 4, 1933

We reached Jabalpur last night. It is now 6:30. I received your letter in Katni yesterday. I went and inspected the work being done in Anantpur. It is solid and steady and therefore also slow. Jethalal is a great worker.

Gordhanbhai is very angry with me. I am of course trying to conciliate him. His idea is to spend the money abroad. I have asked him not to do so. He has not yet asked me about the will, but if he does, I will naturally remember what you have written.

Brajkishan is seriously ill. You know how devotedly he nursed me during the fast. I keep getting news about his health. He is still under treatment, and there is a telegram from Dr Ansari to say that he may perhaps pull through.

I only knew from you about Mahadev having had a companion in prison. Chhaganlal Joshi is well. I got the good news about Ba only yesterday on coming here.

Our work for Harijans prospers. The progress so far has been satisfactory.

* बिगडी कौन सुधारे ? नाथ बिन बिगडी कौन सुधारे ?

XXXI

Jabalpur
December 7, 1933

I shall keep writing to Ba. Going to prison this time was not easy for her, but God will look after her. Thakkarbapa showed me your letter. But the fault is not his. As a matter of fact he tries unceasingly to protect me. He does not let troublesome people come to me at all in the first place. He disposes of so many himself, but some have to be brought to me. There is a constant improvement in dealing with visitors as a result of experience. But do not worry about it. His will be done.

Kishorlal has fallen ill in Bombay. He is somewhat better now. Do write to inquire about his health.

[Dr] Jivraj [Mehta] is also considerably pulled down. He is in Rugby hotel, Matheran.

Mathuradas came along with others and is still with me and will go with me up to Delhi. He is also much reduced and has backache. He cannot move around much, but he will get stronger if he takes some rest.

The Working Committee meeting can only be described as a mere talking session.

What should I say about Jamnalalji? He has put on weight and is generally better, but his ear is as troublesome to him as your nose to you. I am glad to see that you propose to practise *neti** but who is there to teach it to you? I can be regarded as an expert in

* A method of cleaning the nasal passages.

it. Could you not call me in as a specialist? Inexpert use of *neti* often results in slight bleeding. A twig or straw is often used at first, but you should never try it. A strip of fine cloth should suffice. There is no difficulty if you do it slowly. Krishnadas, Mahadev and Devadas all learned it from me. Janakibehn had come with Jamnalalji. Both left at night. . . .

Chandrashankar is doing good work. Kaka and Swami have gone to Matheran for a few days.

I reach Delhi on the 10th.

XXXII

Sitanagar
December 25, 1933

You were awaiting my letter, while I was expecting yours. I was under the wrong impression that the reply to my letter was still due. We are moving so fast that one has no idea of the date and the day of the week. I cannot even recall what has to be written to whom, may be on account of old age.

Chandrashankar has needlessly frightened you about my getting up at 3 a.m. I would get lost if I did not wake up so early. All that you should insist upon is that I go to bed early. It is true that this rule also has been broken recently. But all doctors agree that I have thus far enjoyed excellent health. I do not write so many letters as you imagine. I write only so many as are absolutely necessary. If you were by my side, even you would have asked me to write as many. You rightly complain that I left you in the lurch and came away from prison. But that grievance is very easily redressed, is it not? Give up worrying about me at all.

I never overtax my physical strength. If you saw me, you would award me a certificate that I had been fairly successful in looking after myself. Or perhaps, to tell the truth, God is taking good care of me. ·But even He can do precious little if I frustrate His purpose. It is only because I have merged myself in Him that He preserves me from so many grave dangers. In Madras I was in danger of being crushed to death every day but have been saved. It was due not to human effort but to the will of God.

A letter to Ba will definitely go every week. I have not let any week go by so far. God will preserve Ba. Who else is there to guard her? There is really nothing to worry about Mani. I had a fine letter from *Kanjibhai; I have asked him to come and see me only if he thinks it necessary.

Raja is to be released on February 6. Lakshmi is quite well and Devadas will be joining her in Madras.

Letters from Princess Aristarche come in every week. She also keeps sending money. Her affection is boundless. She is now helping †Trivedi's Manu. . . . .

Manilal‡ and Sorabji‡ still do quarrel with each other. Their differences are about local politics in which I have never been able to guide any one. But I have written to Manilal asking him to do what he thinks right and advising him that he should not abandon ordinary courtesy or enter into disputes involving personalities. I believe that the quarrel will be made up.

* Kanaiyalal Nanabhai Desai.

† Prof. Jayashankar Pitambar Trivedi.

‡ Gandhiji's second son and the son of a Parsi co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa.

I had a fairly sweet letter from Subhas and sent it to the newspapers for publication.

The tour is going from strength to strength. No trouble anywhere. We have not yet come across any rowdy people in the South. The Lord alone knows about the future. There are huge crowds everywhere. We are in Sitanagar today. It is a small and quiet town. Today is the day of silence. I will be here tomorrow too. It would have been difficult to carry on if I did not have these two days of weekly rest.

I met [Shrinivas] Shastri for a short while in Madras. [K. M.] Munshi and Lilavati also met me there. There was a telegram from Bhulabhai [Desai]; he does not seem to have fully recovered.

Kisan is one of my companions in the tour. She is a very good girl and no wonder, for she is a friend of Prema's.

XXXIII

Cudappah (Andhra)
January 2, 1934

It is 3:20 a.m. I have had a wash and now think of you. I am at peace only if I rise so early. I will of course snatch more sleep by day and in any case there is no travelling to be done today. Have no worry at all. I am keeping quite good health.

I do, however, feel that since you do not write much about yourself, you are keeping something from me. You should not do that.

Letters to Ba go regularly every week and they will keep going. At her suggestion, I also send a discourse on the Gita, just as I used to from Yeravda Mandir.

Mahadev can now write only one letter and receive one. He tries to include several in one letter and will be receiving his own through Jivanji [D. Desai]. He is being severely tested but he will come through with flying colours. At present he has buried himself in translations of the Gita.

You already know about Kishorlal. He has not yet got rid of his fever. Now he has himself appointed a committee of three [Kedar-] Nath, Swami and Gomati [Kishorlal's wife], and has agreed to abide by their advice.

Ba's letter came yesterday. Om has made copies and I am sending you one. Om is a very smart girl and is also keen on learning quickly. She is making good progress because she is frank. Kisan is not well; otherwise she also is hard-working. Both are simple in habits and get along quite well with each other.

Radhakant Malaviya came yesterday. He has framed a scheme about the preservation of milk in dry ice and wants my help. It is foolish to expect it in ventures like this. You know that he has returned after training in Europe.

Malkani works hard and has replaced Thakkarbapa satisfactorily. The entire staff is up to the mark and so far all has been well. Anandi and other children are progressing; Ramnarayan Pathak teaches them for 3 hours a week. Jamnadas [Gandhi] is none too well and ill at ease.

I am in touch with Mani but I hope she is not in the same condition as Mahadev. Do you know?

XXXIV

Bangalore
January 8, 1934

I am writing to you after finishing my letter to Ba. It is about four p.m. on the day of silence. Tomorrow there is a meeting about a wage-cut proposed by the textile mills in Ahmedabad. Shankarlal Banker, Gulzarilal and others are already here. The millowners will arrive tomorrow. I have agreed to give five hours and am to proceed to Malabar tomorrow night.

The pressure of work is quite high but my health has remained good. Dr. Subbarao examined me yesterday and was quite satisfied. Blood pressure came to 155-100 which is very good indeed. I expect Thakkarbapa will join us in Kolikode on the 16th.

I am in the Mysore State guest-house here, the same place as before. There is great enthusiasm among the people. The Diwan has been to see me. He remembers you and sends his best compliments. He is very kind indeed.

There was a letter from X asking for permission to sell off the car. Later there was a telegram from Thakkarbapa, saying that he was prepared to sell it. So I gave the permission. I have not been able to understand anything of this. In such cases I have always had to depend on you. That is why I act so often like Ekalavya who made a clay model of Dronacharya and received instruction from it so much so that finally he came to be as good as an archer as Arjuna. I conjure up a mental image of you and put it questions. I have sent a telegram

permitting the sale as I thought that such would have been your advice.

Dr. Bidhan [C. Roy] has narrowly escaped from death. So he wrote in reply to my wire. He has broken a bone and will be confined to bed for a fortnight.

There was a reference to a letter from you in Mama [V. L. Phadke]'s letter. We cannot afford to have separate accounts and separate collections for the Harijan Ashrams at Navsari, Godhra, etc.; people would not pay like that in any case. Therefore it has been decided to make grants to all these institutions from the fund of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. There will be no change in the management of these institutions, but they will receive grants from the central fund and will work under its supervision. Their independent existence will in no way be jeopardized. For the present at any rate, Mama will be devoted to this work at his own wish. I don't like and therefore flatly refuse to guide any one. Do write to me if you want any more information. I do not know what to write, but if you are curious about one thing or another, you only make a sign and I will obtain and send all the information you ask for. Have no fear that you will in that case be increasing my burden. I work, economising on the use of my hands, my mind and my time.

Devadas wires from Ahmedabad that he has been released before his time. He will come over to see me and probably see Ba also.

Kishorlal is improving. Brajkishan is out of danger; he can also move about a little now. . . .

Om and Kisan are well. That Mirabehn is well goes without saying.

XXXV

Kolikode
January 15, 1934

It is four p.m. on the day of silence. We have put up in Nagji Purushottam's bungalow. Devadas and Lakshmi came today. Thakkarbapa and Shankarlal will come tomorrow. I shall meet the Zamorin tomorrow afternoon at half past two and leave for Trichur at five.

Shankarlal I have specially called to talk over a few matters about Khadi. I think that there is unnecessary expenditure in this department. I want to put before him all that I have observed. I feel that the practice of sending Khadi from one province to another should be stopped altogether. On the whole I approve of the Anantpur system. Savli is also fairly good. Krishnadas [Gandhi] and [Shrikrishnadas] Jajuji are both experts and complements each of the other. Krishnadas is giving a good account of himself.

Devadas went and saw Ba. He is full of praise for her fortitude. She is being harassed a little, but life would be too dull without something of the sort.

I have been to Guruvayur where there is no excitement whatever. But Varnashram Sangh sent some North Indian wrestlers to wave flags and to get slightly beaten up in the process. Two of them had occupied the dais and were asked to get down by some young men and there was a scuffle. The wrestlers then got a few blows. They were practically unhurt but pretended to be hurt. So I sent them off to hospital, started the meeting and carried it through. Members of the audience came to

the platform and handed in farthings as well as currency notes. Kaumudi, a little girl, gave away all the jewellery on her person. *'Whom the Lord protects, who dare hurt him?' Therefore we shall live in such a condition as He thinks fit, do as He bids us do and dance to His tune.

In Bangalore we met two women—a mother and daughter from Hungary. Both are skilled painters, live in simplicity and have devoted all their energy to India, for the present at least. They both easily dance to the music of our *bhajans* [hymns].

Nagini, it seems, will go to America. Sirius may go with her.

I enclose Mani's letter. I have written to Swami about slivers and books. I do not know whether the books can be bound together, because they are not the same size. But Swami is an expert pressman and will manage to do it if it is at all possible. Mani's letter to you was sent by Dahyabhai. I shall certainly try to see her and Mahadev if at all I go to Belgam.

When you write to Mani, tell her that it is not always necessary to be by the side of one's elders in order to be of service to them. Whoever does work dear to them renders them perfect service. One would naturally like to be in the company of one's near and dear ones. But she can serve them even from a distance. Mani thinks that the letter must have been sent direct, but as you see, it has evidently passed through the office of the Sabarmati Central Prison among other places. That is no new experience for us. The conquest of happiness must be achieved in spite of such impediments.

*जेने राम राखे रे तेने कोण मारी शके?

Raja is definitely to be released on February 6.

It is very important to learn how to keep needless thoughts out of the mind one way or another. For this, you may try to learn the Gita by heart or study Sanskrit or recite Ramadhun directly as well as in the reverse order.

I do not even have the time to worry; so you see there is no need to ask me not to be anxious.

XXXVI

Kanya Kumari
January 22, 1934

I have not still heard from you but I write out my letter to you as usual. We are in Kanya Kumari today. There are no human habitations hereabouts; it is therefore a very quiet place. The only sound that reaches my ears is that of silver coins received as donations being counted. The sea is just in front of us but is perfectly mute.

The Bihar earthquake seems to have completely destroyed Motihari. Rajendrababu is absorbed in the task of carrying relief to the quake-stricken people. There was a heart-rending wire from him. I have sent him a message of sympathy. Satishbabu is also on the spot. The injured number about fifteen thousand. The number of the dead is not yet known. Even big houses have become unsafe for living.

Muriel Lester is coming from Hongkong in February and will probably see me in Kunur where I expect to be from January 29 to February 5.

Pruthuraj joined us in Kolikode for a few days; he later proposes to go and see his mother.

No opposition was observed in Travancore. The crowds were as large as ever. There was considerable indifference on the part of the Maharaja. C.P. did not meet me at all. Devdhar is in Trivandrum, making some enquiries about cooperative societies. His health has suffered but he is quite happy as long as he can work.

Kelappan will probably marry a Christian lady, and so his connection with the Harijan Sevak Sangh will come to an end.

I have received a letter from Ba. There is nothing much in it, but if possible, I will have a copy made and sent to you. You must have received Mani's letter which I sent.

All the Ashram sisters must have been released today. I have written to them. Kishorlal is still bed-ridden. Jamnalal is hard at work.

A German youth named Butow has come from South Africa and is travelling with us now. He is reported to be a correspondent of the *Hindu*; he just had Rs 1,000 stolen from him. Thakkarbapa has taken a fancy to him. He cheerfully does the work of watchman and porter. He is well-built and never seems to tire. He is active and well-educated. He has become a British subject.

The police have taken charge of Sirius. Nagini will perhaps have sailed by now.

XXXVII

Kunur
January 30, 1934

I have not yet received your letter. I am writing this at two p.m. basking in the Kunur sunshine. Before this I finished the weekly articles for *Harijan*, lunched, finalized the programme for Tamilnad and had a nap.

Bihar takes much of my time at present. You must have read about the distress prevailing there. I get daily reports from Rajendrababu as regards the organization of relief. I am doing whatever things he wants me to do, and there is no immediate need for me to go there. He has asked for the help of those Ashramites who have been released. I have already sent telegraphic instructions and all such as can will go. I have not yet been informed as to who will go. I refer to Bihar in every meeting, and have also collected some cash and ornaments. The response to my appeal is quite good. We have yet to decide how exactly the collections are to be used.

Amtul Salam is here. She was ready to start even today, but I detained her for a week, after which she will go back to her post in Gujarat. Gangabehn and others are recuperating.

I shall reach Belgam towards the end of February or in March. It may have to be dropped if there is a call from Bihar in the meantime. I shall ask for permission to see Mahadev and Mani if Belgam is definitely included in my tour.

Velabehn lost 25 pounds [in jail]. Prema has reached [prison]; so has Lilavati Ashar, though none too well.

XXXVIII

Kunur
February 5, 1934

I write this letter the first thing after the morning wash. . . .

My attempt to meet Shri Aurobindo was necessary in view of the Gujarati colony at his Ashram. His refusal to see me was quite courteous. He wrote that he did not meet anybody. There is no reply at all from the Revered Mother. So I do not go to Pondicheri and am not sorry for it. However I am thinking of sending Chandrashankar and Bapa. We have nothing to lose in calling 'Mother' Mother. The courtesy of calling people by the title they had received was observed even at the Round Table Conference. You will perhaps say that imitating the Conference is the sure road to ruin. The point, however, is that even that Conference did not give the go-by to this civility.

I imagine I have already written about the Zamorin. He lives very simply. No ostentation. His palace is hardly worth the name, being almost unfurnished. He behaved with great politeness, and introduced me to his son. He gave us coconut-milk to drink and gave me fruit as a present. He was quite pleased because we only talked about the weather. He is well advanced in age and said that he now easily forgot things. He is a good man, and I am rather glad to have called on him.

Kunur is a very lovely place. Food is quite cheap if only one gets a house to live in. There is considerable but not bitter cold at this time of the year. Some of our

workers are doing good service among the hill tribes here. They had sent me an invitation; I therefore suggested that I should be allowed eight days' rest in Kunur so that I could do something for the hill people and also dispose of papers which have now piled up. I live in a bungalow belonging to Nageshvarrao. My room is above the garage, small but pretty and tidy. Even the garage is inhabitable. I am glad I came here. People in large numbers come every day from the hills and there were unusually large meetings in Ooty, here and in Kotagiri. Deputations from Harijans met me. I also saw a beautiful ashram managed by them. The people in the hills drink much liquor. The workers are fairly good.

Bihar is getting good help. People from all places are sending it money and clothes. From among the Ashramites Pandit [Khare], Parnerkar, Ravjibhai [Nathabhai Patel], Bal [Kalelkar] and others have already gone. So have Swami and Dhotre. Mathuradas is on the point of going. Others are also ready. But I have detained them until I hear from Rajendrababu. I have also left the decision about myself to him. My own idea is to go to Bihar after doing Karnatak and Orissa, say about March 20. I am making collections everywhere. On this occasion most of my contacts are with those who give coppers. There are a few middle-class donors also, but the generosity of the poor is boundless. Every day women from the hills come and give me the coins in the knots tied at *sadi* corners.

Ramachandran is with me at present. He is a learned man and a good fellow.

Bidaj too has been handed over to Harijan Sevak Sangh. It has also been decided to take the dairy back

to the Ashram. It will thus be able to train Harijans, and the dairy cattle will be safer.

I am enclosing a copy of Ba's letter. Please include what you can from this when you write to Mani. I have already applied for permission to visit her and Mahadev. I have sent a telegram, and a reply should come in a day or two. I reach Belgam on March 6. . . .

They seem to have celebrated the 81st birthday of Abbas Saheb. Kaka took the initiative in the matter. The old man was very pleased. Kalyanji is writing a life-sketch and for this all our scholars went to his place and helped him to revive half-forgotten memories.

I was delighted to learn that you are practising *neti*. Perhaps a hand-rolled wick of fine cloth would be more efficient. It would have the power to absorb dirt. One could easily be made from old *dhotis*. Along with it, *pranayam* [controlled breathing] is also necessary for keeping the nose clear. It is a very good thing that you have got over your constipation. The changes you have made in the diet are sure to yield good results.

. . . The question of going to Bengal is still up in the air. Let us see what happens.

. . . Frost seems to have ruined crops in some places; elsewhere we have rain out of season. These events seem to be directly connected with the earthquake.

XXXIX

Pudupalayam
Tuesday, February 13, 1934

This is Raja's ashram. We are some fifty persons, but all have been comfortably lodged; the weather also helps.

Muriel Lester and her friend joined us in Coimbatore. Yesterday at my instance they left to see the Governor of Bengal, to see if something could be done about *Midnapore. I do not hope for any results, but this was something which we should do. Both the ladies will return on Sunday. Amtul is lying in bed in front of me. Her heart is gold, but her health is very poor.

You must have seen Tagore's criticism of my views. I am replying to it in *Harijan.* He also has himself issued something like a revocation. He writes such things in haste and then corrects himself and so it goes on.

Rajendrababu has now asked me to go to Bihar; so it seems I will have to leave off somewhere. I have telegraphed, saying that I would not in any case be able to start before the twenty-fourth. I am now awaiting his reply.

I enclose a copy of Ba's letter. Lakshmidas has proceeded to Patna. I have just received a letter from Bal. The group from the Ashram is being kept quite busy. Bal and Ravjibhai are in joint control of a store. Parnerkar and Soman are in Patna. Maganbhai is in

* Regarding severe Government reprisals after the assassination of a British official.

the publicity department. I am afraid I must now close.

PS. I nearly forgot to give you an important piece of news. The Government has refused me permission to see Mani and Mahadev.

XL

Kodambakkam
[Madras]
February 19, 1934

It is the day of silence. We are getting ready for the evening prayer. Some people are already sitting in a circle round me. Muriel Lester is one of them. Today we are in an ill-developed poor suburb of Madras. Ganesan has got this new place. A dispensary has already been established, and a tannery is also going to be started. Just now however it is more like a ruin with a verandah on all sides and a large courtyard in between. They have only just fetched some water from outside.

Lester has been to Bengal. The Governor gave her three hours and also a lunch. He was very courteous. He reiterated his resolve not to tolerate indiscipline, but in the end nothing came out of the meeting.

I must now prepare to go to Bihar. I will have to go soon after doing Karnatak, or so it seems at present. Let us see what happens.

We were in Christ-Kula Ashram yesterday. That Dr Paton works there. The head of the institution is Yesudasan, a nice Indian, who is a friend of Kumarappa's. It has a fine situation. They have built a chapel and spent quite a sum of money on it. You can more or less describe it all as putting Christianity in an Indian dress.

I have received your letter about Bihar. I agree with what you say and will do what I can when I get there.

Shrinivas Shastri's wife is ill in hospital. I sent Mathuradas to see her. I have yet to see what I shall be able to do tomorrow. There is a heap of papers to go through, and I have not yet written a line for *Harijan.* I will do whatever God will let me do.

The frost in Gujarat appears to have caused far more damage than I had first imagined. But who cares for the peasantry at present?

I had been to Pondicheri but could not meet any one. No reply was received from Mother. Govindbhai who came to see me at another place told me the whole story. The Ashram is still under surveillance; so apparently it is considered risky even to receive me there. Fifty per cent. of the inmates are Gujaratis. Their daily programme is something like this. They all get up at five a. m. Each seeker gets a separate room. There are about 150 of them from various parts of the country including Dilip Roy and Hiren Chattopadhyaya, husband of Kamaladevi. Shri Aurobindo gives an audience only thrice a year. He and the Mother do not sleep at all. He does recline and rest in an armchair every morning from 3:30 to 4:30 but has no sleep. The seekers have to send in their diary every day and they can ask questions in writing. They get letters from Shri and the Mother four times a day. Between the two they write some 200 letters every day, and no letter remains unanswered. Shri knows many languages and improves the seekers by his inspiration. Hiren Chattopadhyaya has given up drink; meat and alcohol are forbidden in the Ashram. So says Govindbhai. He also invites me to join them. Don't you think this is enough for the present?

XLI

Tuesday, February 27, 1934

I am writing this in the steamer 'Dayavati' on our way from Kundapur to Karwar. Chandrashankar has left for home. There was no difficulty in sending him, as Valji is with me. I am to start from Haidarabad on the 9th, arriving in Patna on the 11th. I will be observing silence soon after, but it is necessary that I go there as soon as possible. It would have been difficult to go earlier. All preparations for Karnatak had already been made, and it would not have been easy to come back to Karnatak from Bihar.

Ambalal [Sarabhai] and Mridula came and saw me, purely out of their affection for me. Ambalal and Saraladevi are going to England. They do not seem to be able to settle down while Bharati and Suhrid are away there. I have found them a wonderful couple; for they manage to give their children complete freedom, although their affection for them knows no bounds.

Lester went to Ceylon. Agatha Harrison will leave London on March 2 to come here.

I enclose a copy of Ba's letter as well as Bhansali's post card which I have kept for you.

You must have seen what they have written about me in the *Times of India*. It is all vicious. How is it to be countered? This is done in the open, but there is also much poisonous propaganda in private. I am carrying on in the faith that truth will in the end overcome falsehood of this sort. This faith has sustained me all along.

Please tell Mani when you write to her next how I have been refused permission to see her. It is galling to think that I shall be two days in Belgam without being able to meet her or Mahadev, but we are helpless.

The dairy which was managed independently has now been transferred to Harijan Ashram. It has been decided to have a separate trust for it.

XLII

Raibag
March 8, 1934

There is no letter from you lately. I have started this letter before prayers. We left Belgam yesterday. Raibag is a small village but it is on the railway line. I have been late in writing this time because Dahyabhai, Chandubhai, Durga, Jivanji and others all came to Belgam when I was there. Dahyabhai met Mani, while Durga, Jivanji and Babla saw Mahadev. Mani and Mahadev can be said to be fairly well. Mahadev is absorbed in his own work. . . .

I have had a full report from Chandubhai [about conditions in Nasik prison]. Do persevere with *neti*, taking care to use fine cloth.

Lester left for Delhi. Harrison is expected to arrive on the 16th. Ba's letter is enclosed herewith. . . .

I shall reach Patna on the 11th. Thakkarbapa and his entourage will go to Delhi. I shall call him over later if there is any possibility of continuing the Harijan tour after reaching Patna.

XLIII

Patna
[Wednesday] March 14, 1934

It is not still 4 a.m. and I have taken this up after finishing the letter to Ba. I reached Patna on Sunday night. We are to start for Motihari at six. I spent yesterday in talking with colleagues. The collections are quite good but the need also is equally great. We must make sure that every pie is wisely spent. Jamnalalji is here. Lakshmidas has now nearly recovered and can move about in the house. Rajendrababu's health can be said to be quite good; he has forgotten his ailment on account of the work before him. I visited Patna city yesterday. Many government buildings have been so badly damaged as to be useless. Patna alone has suffered damage to the tune of a crore and a half, 80 dead and 400 injured. Yet the damage in Patna is as nothing compared with what other parts have suffered. The committee for the Viceroy's fund is different from Rajendrababu's. Let us see what can be done.

Lester and her friend came yesterday from Delhi. Both are to come with me although the friend will have to return to Britain earlier. Lester will stay on as she wants to study everything.

Agatha Harrison is expected to land on the 16th.

Thakkarbapa and his secretariat parted from us in Haidarabad. He will come back when I am able to tour Orissa later. I think I shall be able to leave Bihar in about a month. We passed through Allahabad *en route* and since we had to halt there for three hours, I went

over to Ananda Bhavan. Sarooprani Nehru felt relieved. I was with her and Kamala for quite some time. Both were bed-ridden. . . .

I cannot now write any more. My eyes are quite tired and it will soon be time for prayers. Sleeping is out of the question.

XLIV

March 21, 1934

It is 9 a.m. on Wednesday morning. The Bihar Relief Committee is holding its meeting near by and may ask me in any time now. So if I do not write this now, it would never be finished today. All is well. You will have seen the resolutions in the newspapers. Maulana, Malaviyaji, [Dr] Bidhan [C. Roy] and others were there. I have kept Jamnalalji here for the Relief Committee work, for otherwise I would have to remain here myself. I wish to do as much of the Harijan tour as is now possible.

Raja is suffering from asthma. He is to go to Delhi early in April and will stop here *en route* to attend the Charkha Sangh meeting.

I shall be leaving here about the seventh for Assam. Two weeks have been assigned to Assam. From there back to Patna for a few days and then to Orissa. Thence back here once more. After that nothing is decided as yet. But I do wish to give a few days to each of the remaining provinces.

XLV

Muzaffarpur
March 29, 1934

Please do not lose your temper, for I am writing this at 2:45 a.m. I had set the alarm at three but it went off before 12. I of course got up and started writing after a wash. I carried on for some time and then looked at the time-piece which showed midnight. So much work has accumulated that I did not have the courage to go to bed again and decided to continue with what I was doing. After nearly finishing the *Harijan* articles, I have started writing to you. I shall then write to Ba.

You made me wait quite long this time. I hope you will now write to me more regularly. Harrison is a very brave woman. So is Lester. Harrison is more mature and she is entirely guileless and humble. . . . We are in Muzaffarpur and will leave for Belsand in the morning. Pyarelal is with me only for a short while further. We were in Chhapra yesterday and stayed with Dr Mahmud. Buildings completely in ruin are seen all over. Mahmud is doing good quake relief work in co-operation with the Collector. I have seen the Relief Commissioner. We shall never be able to reach the standard you set during the Gujarat floods but shall do fairly well. Whatever is spent will be spent with discrimination.

Jamnalalji will stay here for the present. Lakshmidas will also be here to look after Khadi production. Others also will be assigned their work by Jamnalal. Bhulabhai came and saw me. He had been to Gaya

for a law-suit and came across here. We only had a short talk.

Mani seems to be tested fairly severely [in Belgam prison]. That is as it should be and God will be her shepherd. Ba will be released in May.

It seems that I shall visit Gujarat only in July. Have no worry either about myself or anything else outside. We do not believe in God as an intellectual diversion. For us He is real and He alone is real. We live and move in the Great Taskmaster's eye so that He may lead us as He will. I don't think it would be an exaggeration if I include you in this.

XLVI

Patna
April 6, 1934

The national week starts today. It is about 2:30 a.m. Recently this has more or less become the usual time for getting up. But I do have a nap later in the day. There was a telegram from you inquiring about my health. I have replied to it. Ansari met and examined me. What he said comes to this that there is nothing really the matter. That I should take rest, of course, every one would advise. I can assure you that this I do as far as possible. The rest I leave to God.

Ansari, Dr Bidhan and Bhulabhai have been and gone. I have given them in writing that it is the duty of all those who believe in entering the legislatures to do so. But they should go in their own name, not in that of the Congress. I feel it is better not to exercise any more check.

I hope you will approve of the decision I have taken after considerable thought. I felt that it was not proper

for any one who wished to offer individual civil disobedience to do so on his own responsibility. I have therefore suggested to colleagues that they also should postpone it. Civil disobedience must first be offered by me alone and I shall invite others later when I think fit. Any one who takes direct action out of his attraction to me cannot be said to be acting independently. You will see a statement on the subject in a couple of days. Do not be anxious if you cannot understand this step. I have no doubt that you will find it quite correct after you have thought a little more about it.

I have gone through Vitthalbhai's will. Everything in it appears to be systematic. My own attitude is that if Bose gets something out of it, let him. Who is your co-prisoner?

XLVII

April 13, 1934

This is a day of *fasting. And we are all stretched out on the deck of the steamer going from Tejpur to Gauhati. The rainy season has already set in here. It rained very heavily yesterday but today it is sunny; so deck travel is bearable. It is nine a.m. now and we shall reach Gauhati about noon. My health is good. I take sufficient rest and do not overtax my strength. If we tried implicitly to follow medical advice we would always have to keep in bed.

I think millowners are more to blame in the present dispute between them and the labourers in Ahmedabad and they themselves admit it. Kasturbhai

* In memory of the massacre in Jallianwalla Bagh, Amritsar, 1919.

cannot be said to have come off well in the part he has chosen to play on this occasion. The resolution passed by the millowners was so absurd that I felt I had to write something. I wrote and gently reproved Kasturbhai. There was only a thinly veiled threat behind the resolution which could have brought down the structure of arbitration laboriously built up during the past twelve years. My letter did take effect in that there were differences of opinion among the millowners themselves. Therefore Chimanbhai and Sakarlal came over. Kasturbhai did not because he was preparing to go to Geneva. I suggested that wages should never be reduced in the absence of strong evidence. I also told them that if they were prepared to establish a correlation between profits and wages as well as to fix a minimum wage, I would try and help them to receive such relief as an agreement on these lines could afford. They liked the idea but said that it would be difficult to obtain the concurrence of other employers in implementing it. There they are right and I will now see what can be done.

You must have read about my decision. I am still very eager to have your opinion. I have of course assumed that you will appreciate the correctness of both the decisions in a moment. I have no doubt about it myself. There is now no danger of lowering the standards of Satyagraha. And those who are for entering the legislatures will no longer be condemned to inaction which they strongly resented. Let them go. If purity is maintained something useful can be done even in councils.

The elders are sure to meet me again. It is very strange that you are not getting your *Harijan*. I am making inquiries.

The nose is of course a very delicate organ but it should be set right. It is difficult to say how this can be done; therefore you will have to think the method out yourself. For I have found that even doctors become helpless at times and things are straightened out when the patient himself makes a discovery. I am sure that *pranayam* [breathing exercises] and the practice of some *asanas* [postures] would be helpful. For in *pranayam* twice the usual amount of air and even more is breathed in during the same period, and some benefit of the extra oxygen taken in should accrue to the nasal passage. . . . *Pranayam* should be practised in fresh air; so it is preferable to do it in the open. I have never yet asked you about your sleeping arrangements. But I take it that you are not locked up in a cell.

Dahyabhai sent me a letter from Mani. It is full of courage but rather pathetic.

XLVIII

Jorhat, Assam
April 18, 1934

It is about the time for prayers. The birds are singing. It dawns earlier in these parts; twilight appears at five a.m.

I enclose a copy of Ba's letter.

You must have now understood the whole situation. I find that the effect of my decision has been entirely good. Having made the decision, I now realize that it was the only one which could be made. It has come neither too early nor too late but at the proper time. But why should we worry about the consequences? We cannot reconcile the study of the Gita with a preoccupation with results. The consequences will look after

themselves. How are we to know if the apparent good is deceptive and the apparent evil is really good?

There will be a meeting in Ranchi. I shall give it what lead I can. I feel that it is our duty to give a free rein to the parliamentarians. It is only fair that those who daily attend the councils in the spirit should be permitted to enter them in fact; then alone can they realize the advantages and disadvantages of such action. Don't you think it is better for some one who is always dreaming of *jalebi* to eat it and find out its actual taste for himself? Mathuradas will very probably come; so also Perin and others. I hope Raja will also come, for all this seems to suit him well. The same is the case with Mathuradas and has been from the first with Rajendrababu. Pyarelal is with him at present.

Pierre Ceresole, a philanthropist, will be arriving from Geneva. He is himself a skilled engineer and has more or less made it his vocation to go and help wherever there is a natural calamity. He will land at Bombay on the 25th to go to Bihar. Mathuradas will meet him and bring him over or send him to Ranchi. Higginbotham also was here and has promised to help. Harrison and Lester will meet me in Patna. Both have been to Calcutta. They are hard-working, pure and brave, but theirs is a voice in the wilderness.

I have put in some effort behind the scenes for *Obeidullah. I think it is bearing fruit. I hope he will survive.

A strange epidemic seems to have attacked children in Ahmedabad. Some say it is due to the cinema.

* Dr Khan Sahib's second son, who was fasting for a transfer from Multan prison.

I would not be surprised if it is. Observers say that it imposes a great strain on the brain and the eyes.

Chandrashankar who had gone home and was not well returned too quickly and fell ill again. He was therefore sent back. It was clear that he could not stand up to this travelling.

Kamala Nehru and Sarooprani have gone to Calcutta for medical treatment.

XLIX

Muzaffarpur
April 23, 1934

I have received your two letters. I have just started writing after a wash. It is 3:40 a.m. I hope you will regard this as an improvement in my habits. We are at Gokhalepuri in Muzaffarpur. We arrived from Assam at 10:30 p.m. last night. This new suburb called after Gokhale by Bajpai is to be declared open by me after I have ended my silence.

Valji was rather indisposed; so instead of going to bed on arrival I called in a doctor and it was midnight before I went to sleep. Do not get worried on my behalf. I am very careful about my health and do manage to get sufficient sleep somehow or other.

I was surprised to find that you are puzzled, as I had told every one that you would not be long in realizing the necessity of this step. But I can see from your letters the pain you have felt. No one outside prison seems to have taken it as you have. The same was somewhat the case with Jawaharlal also but I had thought that he too would grasp the matter in a moment. Does this mean that my view that those inside a prison cannot

understand outside events is also true in your case, or have I myself committed a blunder? I do not think so because I can see it very clearly that the decision was the right one. It is no use asking why it did not occur to me earlier in Poona. That was not the proper time for it. What was done in Poona was correct for the situation at that time and in the present circumstances what I have now done is the right thing. If we had not taken this decision, the cause would have suffered immensely.

The difficulties are there. None of them escaped my attention. We shall overcome them. This step has benefited the people and will benefit them still more. It is possible to explain things to the non-cooperating peasants, and the explanation will be duly given. It would have been ineffective if I had hauled the flag down. You of course will not even dream that there is any egoism in this. As you are a prisoner, it is not possible to set forth all the arguments here and I will now stop. Sweet are the fruits of patience. Have patience and you will see that everything will turn out well in the end.

It should be quite easy to understand the revival of the Swaraj Party. It was extremely necessary that it should come back to life. I felt that Congress must have a place for a party which has managed to exist even after so many knocks. This is necessary not only at the present moment but at all times even in the future. There are difficulties of course, self-seeking, lack of skill and whatever else you will. But you cannot eradicate what is already established. You can only reform it or control it and nothing more or less. You may even say that I have prompted them; they did not have the courage to take the first step although they wanted to

do it. What I had only suggested in Poona is now being achieved. It would have been quite different if we had succeeded in keeping the Congress altogether away from the legislatures; but that would have been coercion pure and simple. . . .

I received the telegram about Phulchand Bapuji Shah's death only yesterday. A very good worker has passed away. The enclosed note was drawn up by Narsinhbhai [Ishvarbhai Patel]. I think you will enjoy reading it. Narsinhbhai writes that he died in sleep. He kept working to the last day and did not have any complaint. The clock just stopped ticking during the night. Chandrashankar Pandya asks me what should be done. What should we do? This is no time for memorials. Have you any ideas?

L

Ranchi
May 3, 1934

I have both your letters. I cannot take away the pain you are feeling. Only time will soothe it. We may not escape from difficulties by courting imprisonment. . . . I have not snatched away the weapon* with which I had armed the people. I have only postponed its use to prove its efficacy. That can be proved only by experience. Lucky they who will live to see it.

* Satyagraha.

LI

Sakhigopal
May 10, 1934

I am awake, quite fresh at 1 a.m. Do not be shocked, annoyed or worried. It is the doing of God with whom all things are possible. I am reclining on a bed of straw spread on the floor. The name of the village where we have halted is Chandanpur. This is the third day of our pilgrimage on foot. We are about ten miles away from Puri. We marched from Puri yesterday. Thakkarbapa has planned this pilgrimage as you planned the march to Dandi.

I felt thoroughly disgusted with travelling. I explained in Puri, how miserable I was, having been in trains and motor-cars. I, Thakkarbapa and others, all appreciated the necessity of the change but shied off from the consequences. In the end they reconciled themselves and the decision was taken. I implemented it by walking to a meeting in Puri. The opposition of the orthodox party has lost its edge; and there were only half-hearted attempts to disturb our meetings. The news of this pilgrimage on foot had not spread when we started yesterday morning. But at the village where we stopped for the night the crowds became larger as the day advanced, and by the time we reached Chandanpur the road was filled with men and women. The meeting which was held soon after arrival was attended by a multitude which converged to it from all directions. We are stretched in the open on the outskirts of the village. For me only there is what looks like a shed made with leaves. Apart from the new additions of

Harakhchand, Jivram and Purbai we are the same old party. The local leaders are all here along with Gopabandhu Chaudhary's wife and Sonamani. This will be the pattern of the tour in Orissa. I have already appealed to the other provinces that I should be allowed to finish this tour on foot in Orissa and they should therefore no longer insist on taking me elsewhere. We will have to consider what to do during the rainy season. If movement on foot is then not possible, I would myself like to remain in one place. Let us see how the events shape themselves. I will know more when I see other workers in Patna. I shall try and explain this to them if I can. I take it that you will not have any difficulty in understanding the new order. You know I would like to have your approval of as many of my actions as possible. But you should not approve of them only to keep me pleased.

You must have read about the serious motor accident we had on leaving Ranchi. "Whom God protects, who dare harm him?" asked Dhiro Bhagat, drawing upon his lifelong experience.

LII

Champapurhat [Utkal]
May 22, 1934

I got your letter the day before. It is 3 a.m. just now.

Masani of the Socialist Party has been with us and will be going today. The Orissa tour will be over in Balasore on the 12th. Thereafter, I have decided to stop travelling on foot and propose to stay for a few days at one place in each province. I reach Bombay on the 14th and Poona on the 17th. Leave it for Ahmedabad

on the 26th. From Ahmedabad I proceed to Sindh for three days and then to Lahore for another three days. From there to the U.P. I enclose a copy of the itinerary which is subject to alteration later.

Ba has been released. She will join us after going to Wardha and Delhi.

I wanted to spend Rs 5,000 out of the flood relief fund to relieve similar distress among Harijans. But I was told your instructions were to the effect that the fund was not to be drawn upon. Therefore I took only Rs one thousand. I thought I should consult you before taking anything more. Please let me know if you can recall anything and in any case what are your wishes in this matter.

Narandas had nose bleeding and came out of prison looking like an old man. Swami and Surendra too have suffered. Starch and oil which only are available in jail are not enough It seems that one cannot do without milk or curds.

Manilal's wife gave birth to a boy. I have now hardly any interest in this growth of the family tree. It only makes me rather sad. Nature cannot be thwarted, and contraception is a remedy worse than the disease. As long as death is not conquered, all that man does is mere fumbling: Do you still remember the first verse of Ishopanishad which I tried to learn by heart in Yeravda prison? It contains only eighteen verses and yet is a compendium of all knowledge. The same view of life is expressed in that Upanishad as in the Gita. The seed in the Upanishad has developed into a beautiful tree in the Gita.

LIII

Barimul [Utkal]
May 30, 1934

It is already Wednesday but there is no letter from you yet.

The newly built ship has already sprung a leak. It should keep afloat but it has yet to be seen whether it will last the whole voyage. The big four* are meeting again in Bombay on the 15th.

Mahendrababu, Rajendrababu's elder brother, is seriously ill and may only just pull through. If he dies, Rajendrababu will all at once be burdened by considerable responsibilities. Do write to him.

Ceresole, Agatha and Muriel are leaving on the 15th. They all have had considerable experience. Ceresole will return in October along with other co-workers. The work in Bihar is progressing fairly well, generally under the supervision of Jamnalalji.

Malkani has now taken Bapa's place. I saw Devadas in Patna. He has put on weight; both his marriage and Delhi have suited him well. . . .

The small talk this time will be from Sushila, Prabhavati and Om, who are all writing to you. The heat here is perhaps worse than in Ahmedabad.

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* Pandit Malaviya, Dr Ansari, Dr B. C. Roy and Shri Bhulabhai Desai.

LIV

Garadpur [Orissa]
June 7, 1934

There is no letter from you yet this time also: mine have all been sent regularly. It has started raining here; so everything has now come to a standstill. It will shortly be time for the morning prayer. While I was writing this, Satishbabu arrived with a party of ten from Bhadrak station with their luggage; it took them an hour and three quarters to negotiate the two-mile muddy road.

The prayers are over and I resume.

Satishbabu is touring Bengal on foot. It is difficult to assess the results of my pilgrimage as a pedestrian but I for myself am fully satisfied. Everything else seems insipid.

Harrison has left for Bombay. I shall meet her there again. She is a very kind woman. Muriel who has been travelling with Jamnalalji will also meet me in Bombay.

LV

Poona
June 27, 1934

I tried hard to find the time to write to you last week but in vain. I even held over others' letters, expecting to be able to write myself. Even today I am writing under pressure. If I had the time I would fill pages.

As it is you will have to be satisfied with whatever I can give.

I shall do what I can for Chandubhai. Nothing will be left undone. I am going only because a tour in Gujarat is necessary. If I go, I cannot but make collections for the Harijans. You will have read about my decision. For the present, keep watching the situation as it develops. Who knows the right or wrong in this matter? All that we can expect is that what we do should be good as far as we know. I believe that the correct thing is being done.

I heard that you have not been well for some time Please improve your health by taking all such treatments as are possible. Call for doctors if necessary. No one will give anything unless you ask for it. Demand all that you can legitimately ask for and get rid of the trouble in the nose.

Perhaps you do not like the resolution which was passed this time. But I think it will be beneficial. Bada Bhai [Pandit Malaviya] came and saw me. Let us wait and see. There are so many new germs floating in the air that it is impossible to control all of them. We can only do our own part and be done with it. You should remain unperturbed, as it is fruitless and harmful to think of outside things from where you are.

I do not consider the beating up of Parikshitlal as an unimportant event. The reaction to it is almost non-existent. This public indifference is worse than the original atrocity.

Ba has now joined me. She is well and happy.

Kanti is with Devadas. He has joined a college and has great ambitions. Radha has joined Professor Karve's school [in Hingne].

You must have read about Mirabehn. It suddenly occurred to her that she should go out and do something on her own. I agreed and she went. She had been too much under my shadow and it is good if she can regain some of her original independence. She has only gone for a few months. She saw Maxwell only to speak about the condition of ordinary prisoners, as she herself has said.

That's all for the day. I wrote it this morning in 'Parnakuti.' We now leave for Bhamburda.

LVI

Bhavnagar
July 2, 1934

Some things were scored out in your last letter in the part where you mention the names of persons you met.

There is a telegram today that all the Satyagrahi women in Sabarmati prison were released, Mani probably being one of them. Some men were also released but not all.

What shall I say about the bomb thrown in Poona? Something of the sort was only to be expected. It is all to the good that the incident occurred in the course of my Harijan service. A thing which is used against one group is bound to be used against another unexpectedly. But not a sparrow falls without God's will.

I am writing this in Bhavnagar. You are already aware of the conditions here. The difficulty is that the workers cannot pull on with one another. The collection should be substantial, about Rs. 30,000.

Don't worry about the non-cooperating peasants.

I am very busy and I cannot write a longer letter. I have given standing orders to others also to write to you.

. . . is in need of more money for medical treatment, but I have told him that not more than a hundred rupees per month can be made available in any case.

LVII

Karachi
July 11, 1934

Recently I have not been able to write to you on the same day of the week. I began writing this at 5:30 a.m. after breakfast. But then a Parsi lady came to see me with her fifteen-year old daughter. The girl has become an all-India champion in tennis but she is now averse to life in the world and has a religious bent of mind. She therefore came specially to see me. She gave ten rupees for Harijans and has now gone after taking my autograph.

Do not be unhappy about my impending *fast. It had to come. Large crowds gather around me and the Sanatanists are on the war path. If people cannot tolerate them, such scuffles are inevitable. Mere words will not bring thousands to their senses; a fast is an appropriate remedy in their case. The crowds are larger than ever and it is very difficult to control them. Seven days should pass without any difficulty. Please do not get worried. My health is quite good. The blood pressure keeps around 150 in spite of all the burden of work. That is a good sign. The weight is 104. I should feel relieved if the rest of the tour is completed without

* Undertaken to atone for the beating received by some Sanatanists at the hands of pro-Harijan volunteers at Ajmer.

further trouble. August will be spent in fasting and recovering from the fast. God alone knows what I shall do next.

I want full details about your health. I am writing to Dahyabhai.

I got the news yesterday about Mani being released. Mahadev and Pyarelal will join me in Lahore. Kakasaheb has already joined from Haidarabad. It is better that these three remain with me for the present. Narahari is not to come. If I stay at one place for some time it will be possible to meet every one properly. His will be done.

Ba is quite well. She manages to get the sort of diet she needs, and Thakkarbapa is always there to look after her. . . .

LVIII

Lahore
July 16, 1934

I had not the least idea you would be released from prison. The Government and ourselves seem to be going our own ways without consulting each other. That is all right in a way. The policies of both will be obvious from their action. I shall later on seek your opinion as an umpire after you have had some time to study the situation.

I certainly prefer that you only come over when your nose has been properly treated. Your presence is necessary in Banaras, but if your health does not permit, we shall carry on in your absence. . . .

Lalnath* seems to be the best of the lot. He is brave and keeps his word. He does of course abuse me but

* A demonstrator on behalf of orthodox Hindus.

that is a universal privilege. This is not the first time he was beaten up. His followers also have been beaten, but he has never complained to the police and usually does not ask for police protection for his men. He keeps good control. If I had not kept strict control over our men, they would have been badly hurt and our cause would have suffered. Only today there is a letter from some one who says that he was among those who provoked ill-feeling against Lalnath. He is one of our good workers, a writer, and a poet. He asks me for a penitential exercise. Would you still insist that I should not undertake the fast? Whom can I consult in such matters and where? If a snake bites some one and a doctor is told about it, should he seek another opinion or use his own knowledge as best he can? I am not at all eager to take such a step without consulting co-workers, but sometimes I am helpless in the matter. Ghanshyamdas asked to be consulted before the decision. I wrote to him and then he left it to me. Devadas suggested a four-day fast; Jairamdas felt that it was a necessary step and also that if a fast was to be undertaken it should be at least for seven days. Bapa did not object. Nor did Chandrashankar and Kaka [Kalelkar]. The great task before me cannot be accomplished without such fasts.

The popular awakening is tremendous. I find the crowds larger than ever before in Lahore and elsewhere. One thing I am ready to accept for August: Save me from railway journeys and motor-car drives and let me be in one place or move from place to place on foot. After August who knows?*

* From September Gandhiji was to be free from the self-imposed restriction of his activities to Harijan service.

Andrews will arrive here on August 25. You will have a report from Swami. And Chandrashankar will write to you.

I am going to Calcutta for spring cleaning only. But Dr Bidhan Roy has written to say that I may probably have to see the Governor. That is a fairly old matter which was well supported by Agatha and others. The main subject is terrorism in Bengal and seems to have now come up.

More when we meet. In the meantime Mahadev will keep you fully informed.

[This and the following letters up to No. LXXXIII were sent to the Sardar at Bombay]

LIX

Wardha
August 19, 1934

I have your messages. It will be nice if you come over here only after you have fully recovered. Andrews is to come on the 25th and I would like you then to be here if possible. I get here all the rest that I need. Nobody bothers me and the 'watchmen' follow Jamnalalji's instructions to the letter. You will also find Wardha a quieter place than Bombay. But that of course only after you have completely recovered from the attack of influenza. It will be better for Mani also if you come.

It seems as if nothing can be done about your nose just yet. But if anything can be done, I think you should give it a trial and see if it is any use. It involves no risk; you have only to keep to the bed for some time, that is all.

I cannot leave the Congress all at once. But I share my agony with you. How can I go until all of you allow me to go? But I do feel that that is the only course open to me. I seem to be retarding the progress of the Congress. To hold on to an instrument in which one has no faith and to prevent it being used by those who have faith—that is a pathetic and dangerous situation to boot. Is it not our duty to pull the Congress out of it? It does not matter as long as one can think of a remedy for corruption, but what else can one do when he finds that the only thing possible is to walk out? When I leave Congress, there will be an end of the hypocrisy in it. Truth and untruth, violence and non-violence, Khadi and calico or mulls—all things will pass. If that is the real stand of the ordinary Congressman, he can only function accordingly. But that is impossible so long as I am in the Congress. The rules cannot be relaxed with my approval, and this will never be forthcoming. If they are abr gated by the Congress i spite of my opposition, is it not as good as expelling me? Would it be advisable to let things go that far? These and similar questions I want to raise before you, Raja and others.

We have also to consider what I should do in September or whenever I regain strength after the fast. That discussion is essential and there is not much time for it.

Jawaharlal's explosion is not so dangerous as it sounds. He only exercised his right to let off steam. I believe he is now quiet.

We shall do what you suggest about the distressed Gujarati farmers although I have also some considered ideas of my own about it.

In the end the Parliamentary Board meeting was postponed just as you wanted, though the reason for postponement was different.

LX

Wardha
August 20, 1934

I have omitted to answer one of your queries.

I can reply to X's letter at once but as it also involves Y I would like to know whether you are in agreement with my own view of this matter. I think it is the only correct view. Thus if — and others so wish, we shall be silent about it, or else we can issue statements in the light of what we consider Congress policy to be at present. Or I might publish my independent opinion on my own responsibility. In the meantime, I am writing to X that I have written to you about it and that a detailed reply would be sent later. He is making unnecessary fuss. I feel that there is no hurry about it.

I see your point about sending Mahadev to Allahabad. I am still thinking about it. Shall I wait for a reply to my letter?

LXI

Wardha
August 21, 1934

I have your letter. I can appreciate the necessity for you to stay there. Only you can judge the relative importance. In any case we have to do the same sort of work either here or there. One should stay where the need is greater; so do just as you think fit.

The question of purifying the Congress is very important. It can be discussed more fully only when

we meet. It is however essential that Congress should formulate its own policy. This question can be disposed of if X is called here for discussions. I am trying to arrange it in September on a date to be fixed with you. If you cannot come at all, I will talk it out with him. I will not give anything in writing without showing it to you.

I can fully understand your feelings about Gujarat. Do just as you feel like doing. All that we are trying to comprehend has to be with the idea of the future in our minds.

Do talk everything over with Andrews when he comes there. I shall keep you informed about what happens here.

Mahadev will go to Allahabad today. He should be back by Saturday.

Don't fall ill again by working beyond your strength.

I forgot to write about Kaka's resignation of membership in all trusts. His decision was taken with my consent. It was taken not in sorrow, but only as a matter of duty. It was I who suggested that he should write to you about it. The question of your authority never occurred to me. Kaka was very much hurt by your remarks about his failure to consult other trustees and behaving as if such consultations had been held.

LXII

Wardha
August 22, 1934

Here is a problem to be solved by you. Kaka wishes to go and work in the South. I suggested to the teachers who have come here that they should live in villages and do constructive work including basic education. They liked the idea and those who can be relieved are prepared to carry it out. Kaka is one of them. . . .

Mathuradas will definitely go and meet Andrews on Saturday. Send others also if they can make it convenient to go. If possible, please arrange to have him stay with you and let him leave for here the same day if he so wishes.

LXIII

Wardha
August 23, 1934

I enclose a letter about the dissensions in Delhi; tear it up when you have read it. I have flatly refused to have anything to do with it. Such news keeps coming in every day. Everyone for himself and the devil take the nation. Such being the prevailing mental attitude, I cannot see how we can reach our goal. I have also received complaints against Aney from Bengal. I have clearly written back that his impartiality is above suspicion, and they should repose full faith in him.

Malaviyaji has issued orders to the *Hindustan Times* to modify its policy about the Communal Award and therefore Ghanshyamdas [Birla] has sent his resignation with arguments in favour of his own opinion. Wait and see what happens now. One fails to understand how their minds are working.

You will see in the papers a statement issued to the Associated Press by me in connection with Rajendrababu's telegram. It would be a good idea if you also keep issuing similar statements from time to time. Maulana [Abul Kalam Azad] telegraphed asking how they can call themselves the Congress Nationalist Party. I wired back to say that this question could only be answered by the Congress President; that I might write something about it but he should approach you. Now see if you hear from him.

I enclose Rajaji's letter as it is worth reading. You may write to him if you feel like it. Go to Madras if you have the time and the energy. I have not seen the *Statesman*. It may write anything whatever, but how can we conceal the truth? Praphulla Ghosh is here; his account of the corruption in Bengal is distressing.

LXIV

Wardha
August 24, 1934

Kaka has resigned his trusteeship of Gujarat Vidyapith. All of us have come to the conclusion that you should be the Chairman of the society; and we have already appointed you to that post. I had no recollection of my connection with it from the legal standpoint; so when I made inquiries I was told that legally I had nothing to do with it. But I have been regarded as Chancellor from a spiritual standpoint and the professors had maintained the understanding that I was to be allowed to intervene on any occasion I thought fit. But how can an organization be run like that? Therefore only you can be its Chairman according to law. I am satisfied with the spiritual status that I may have

and do not have the desire or strength to undertake any further responsibility.

On my recommendation we have taken another decision subject to your approval, that Narahari should be Manager of the Harijan Ashram, and teachers from the Vidyapith whom he needs should work with him. The salaries of Narahari and other teachers should be met from Vidyapith funds as long as they last. In my opinion this burden should not be shouldered by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the present, in view of its policy that it should spend the least possible amount from its funds on caste Hindus. The ideal is that up to 95 per cent. of its income should go to Harijans direct. In order that this may be realized, we must first set the example in our own affairs. The third resolution—also adopted subject to your approval—was that all the remaining teachers should, if they agree, go and settle in villages and work for their uplift on lines suggested by me. Narahari will explain this programme to you and you can cancel without hesitation anything in it which you do not like. Kakasaheb, Kishorlalbhai, Maganbhai, Soman and Narahari who were present have given their consent. I have already spoken to Thakkarbapa about Narahari. The Harijan Ashram cannot show good results without a person like him. If it is well managed, I am sure that the Harijan problem will be somewhat nearer solution. Then only will the gift of Satyagraha Ashram bear fruit. Therefore, even if we can easily place Narahari elsewhere, this seems to be the best use to which we can put him at present. He himself takes deep interest in the matter and is confident of making it a success. Therefore, please let Narahari at any rate work in the Harijan Ashram.

LXV

Wardha
August 24, 1934

I have received both your letter and telegram. I am not replying by wire because I have already written on this subject yesterday. If you have not said anything after seeing the article, you might make a statement like this :

"I have read the proceedings of the new party formed by Pandit Malaviyaji and Shri M.S. Aney. I have read telegrams and letters asking me to clarify certain points. In my opinion it is not proper to use the Congress name without the Congress authority. The party may be called the Nationalist Party of Congressmen if its composition is strictly confined to Congressmen. But without the authority of the Congress duly received it cannot with propriety be called the Congress Nationalist Party especially when it is formed deliberately to propagate a policy in direct contradiction to that which is the official policy of the Congress. The adoption of the Congress name cannot but confuse the popular mind, and I would respectfully urge Panditji to reconsider the position and adopt another name for the Party which he had a perfect right to form for the education of Congressmen and others. The other point I should like to emphasize is that no one but the Congress Parliamentary Board can run elections in the name of the Congress. Lastly in the midst of the unfortunate differences between Pandit Malaviyaji and Sjt Aney and the Working Committee I hope that all Congressmen will loyally support the policy enunciated in the resolution of the Working Committee re the Communal Award."

Do make any changes in the above that you think fit.

Rajendrababu's letter is rather peculiar. There is only one answer to it. The Congress cannot undertake any responsibility regarding funds required by its candidates to contest elections. Nor can we make any private collections. That is for Bhulabhai and others to do. Please speak to Bhulabhai about it. He wants that a Working Committee meeting should be held. This may be held in Bombay or Wardha just as you wish, early in September as desired by Bhulabhai.

Mahadev wires that Jawaharlal has been arrested and that he had been able to see him.

LXVI

Wardha
August 25, 1934

I hope you received the letter I wrote yesterday. Mathurababu brought your letter today. I have sent word with him that elections should be contested only if the cost is borne by the Parliamentary Board, not otherwise. They should have no expectations from you or me. They can by all means fight elections without spending any money if they have sufficient confidence. If that is not possible they should not take part in elections without careful consideration. If it is possible anywhere to fight elections without expenditure and on the strength of one's reputation alone, it should be possible in Bihar. But I really cannot say anything about it because I have no idea how the whole thing is done. For the rest nothing can be better than being able to contest elections on behalf of Congress at little or no cost to the candidates. . . .

Never mind if you cannot come. The purpose of personal talks will be pretty well served by correspondence.

Mirabehn seems to be working very hard [in England]. There may be nothing to show just now but we will not regard her visit to Britain as useless. I shall arrange to send you copies of letters from abroad as soon as Mahadev returns, unless you are already receiving them. Muriel went to see Lloyd George and talked with him for hours. Thus these few friends go on working according to their lights.

LXVII

Wardha
August 26, 1934

I suppose Mahadev has replied to your letter. Raja came today in great hurry to get away from here. I was with him quite long and so letter writing has suffered. Aney has also been and gone. All that he did was to bring me love and greetings from Malaviyaji. He asked me if I had something to say. I said that if they wanted to maintain propriety, they should put up candidates in each place only after mutual consultations and nowhere merely with a view to oppose. He wanted to catch the train for Nagpur and went away, promising to return later. This new party has only muddled things. I do not think they will achieve anything worth while.

There is no harm if the Working Committee meets at Wardha. If it does, it will give me at least the opportunity of seeing you.

I hope you continue gaining strength. . . .

I have dashed this off during self-imposed silence after the evening prayers. If there is anything more I will write tomorrow.

August 27, 1934

PS. One thing more. I need not now write to Balubhai [Thakore] about our libraries. I write to you only to remind you that if you get the Vidyapith books back, there will still be with them the Ashram books worth 30 to 50 thousand rupees. These are lying unused at present. If they keep a librarian, the books would be systematically catalogued, rules about lending them framed and the books issued to the public regularly. Something should be done about it.

Andrews and [Stanley] Jones are here. Bhulabhai will be meeting you tomorrow.

LXVIII

Wardha
September 3, 1934

I have surpassed myself in writing today. Both the waist and the back are aching in protest but the protest must be disregarded for the present.

I read Narahari's letter only today. I feel some injustice has been done to him. There is certainly nothing in the letter to get angry about. As he could not present his case before you in Bombay, he has stated it now in writing with great humility. He is of course expecting too much in trying to get you to persuade Kaka to stay on and reestablish co-operation. But this is only a request. It only betrays ignorance of your temperament. He ought to have regarded your letter to me as your final opinion; and this opinion is both clear and comprehensive. I wrote to Narahari that if any one can keep Kaka in Gujarat, it would have your approval and also your blessings. Kishorlal told me that you wrote a sharp reply to Narahari. If you think my view

is correct, please write to him in good humour. I send his letter back in case you want to reread it.

LXIX

Wardha

. . . Kaka is down with fever. The temperature has not yet returned to normal. He has nothing else apart from cold and a little cough. There still is the possibility of typhoid. Do write a note to Kaka.

Jones is better but not quite well. Please write him also a couple of lines. Dr Khansaheb is examining him. . . .

LXX

Wardha
September 20, 1934

. . . I read your remarks about Narahari. Your annoyance is natural. But there is nothing deliberate behind all this. It is entirely a matter of misunderstanding which will pass away with time. For I am certain that none is evil-minded. I have decided that even in order to get over this bitterness Kaka should not leave Gujarat for the present. He can run or ruin education all over India from where he is.

There is no question of your getting out of the Vidyapith. Further if you agree with me, all that the administration of the Vidyapith means that money be handed out to various persons in terms of its resolutions. The Vidyapith will be a walking institution. Each will be doing work assigned to him. Any decisions to be made about education will be taken by Kaka or by the teachers in the Vidyapith. In my opinion whoever selects a particular place for work will discharge his responsibilities

independently. If any one feels like putting questions to another in whom he is interested he will do it only as a friend. That is my idea and I have discussed it fully with Kaka, Kishorlal and Narahari. If you like it, put it into practice in a single letter and close the chapter. . . .

I hope you are keeping good health. Rajendrababu should arrive about the 23rd. You will be here by then, won't you?

There are quite a few mistakes in Bapu's statement* as printed in the papers. Will send a correct copy tomorrow. I feel that copies might be sent to members of the A.I.C.C. and also sold at a nominal price.

Mahadev

LXXI

Wardha
September 21, 1934

I cast one more burden on your shoulders. I send Sumitra to Bombay and wish that Mani should arrange to have her eyes examined and treated.

My statement is being widely criticized. You should try and create the climate suitable for me to get out of Congress. No one is interested in spinning and wearing Khadi. Your statement to the press hits the nail on the head.

Aney came and saw me yesterday. He sat for two hours. You will have read our joint statement. Nekiram wires to say that Malaviyaji will come on the 26th. I told Aney that there was no need for Malaviyaji to

*Dealing with his intention to retire from the Congress.

undertake such a long journey. It is enough if both the parties can be persuaded to withdraw from places where there is a prospect of defeat. I said I would definitely like to see [C.Y.] Chintamani and Kunzru to win, for they are very useful men. I could not, however, think of a way to bring them in. . . .

LXXII

Wardha
October 4, 1934

I had your letter yesterday and asked Kishorlal to write to you. I am very busy and just manage to cope with the work although something always remains in arrears at the end of the day.

Aney met me yesterday. Nekiram had come the day before. I suggested to Aney that he and you could still talk things over, and if there is any difference of opinion, some such person should be appointed umpire, as for instance Bahadurji or Tejbahadur [Sapru]. But he did not favour my proposal. He said that the names would keep changing until the scrutiny was completed and whatever could be done would have to wait until then.

Then again Aney said it would be better if the election were held in November. I said : "Vallabhbhai refused an extension only for Malaviyaji's sake. If you send a telegram to Vallabhbhai he may perhaps grant the extension." I do not know if this is at all feasible. . . .

LXXIII

Wardha
October 7, 1934

If Maharaj [Malaviyaji] comes, I will be on my guard.

If you try to suffocate me, I may be driven to pick a quarrel.

I am getting resolutions ready for you. I find it difficult to tackle the one about 1,000. I am scribbling and scoring it out most of the time.

LXXIV

Wardha
October 8, 1934

I read your letters to Mahadev. See if you can manage to come along with Dr Ansari.

There were many telegrams about Ishvarsharan. I have not sent them on to you but I enclose one, viz. Baba Raghavdas'. Krishnakant Malaviya is opposing him. Aney suggests that Chintamani should replace him and Ishvarsharan should withdraw; also that there should be no opposition to Bhagavandas. This certainly appears to me worth doing if it can be managed. Ishvarsharan must stand down in favour of Chintamani. If there is an election fight against Bhagavandas it will certainly embitter relations. I have telegraphed to you accordingly.

There were lengthy telegrams from Nariman and Mathuradas about not postponing the Congress session. It seems to me only a waste of money. I have no

inclination about it either way and merely acted as a postman. Neither you nor I can let anything happen which may harm the Congress or the Parliamentary Board. And I am not in a position to have anything to say about such matters from where I am.

The Khan brothers have got stuck in Bengal. It is now difficult to get them over here on the 19th. I have written to them; there is nothing more we can do.

Don't you fall ill again, although I am reminded of William, Prince of Orange. When God wanted to get work done through him, he remained unhurt even in a shower of bullets.

LXXV

Wardha
November 18, 1934

On reading all the three letters from you, I find that you have not realized the real nature of Gram Udyog Sangh [the Village Industries Association]. The idea is that all such goods as villages are capable of producing should be purchased from rural areas. We may thus repay some part of our debt to villages. Whether we shall be able to do it is another question. Movements which six or seven of us have started have received general support. If it is our duty to do what I have proposed we should all use village-made paper, pens, ink, penknives, soap, sugar, flour, jaggery, rice etc. for instance. It may be that we may not be able to do many of these things, but if we regard it as a paramount duty, millions of rupees will go into villagers' pockets and the value of villages will be raised. Only thus can the

villager's Swaraj of our dreams be achieved and it would be non-violent Swaraj. That is the whole thing in a nutshell.

This Association can function properly only if there are half a dozen men who work for it round the clock. My attempt is to draw in people who have the Congress mentality but are not called Congressmen; there will, of course, have to be some Congressmen too. I am trying to attract Jairamdas to the new organization in the hope that he would be released by Rajendrababu and yourself. I am also trying to interest Khansaheb. I do not know if Jalbhai will come in. If he does not I want to invite Khurshed. These are the dreams I am dreaming. They may come true or not, but do give me a lot of comfort. You may now come if you are free. It is necessary that you get your nose treated first. How many workers from Gujarat shall I engage in this work? Ravjibhai has sent in his application. I wrote to him that even if he gave up his present post, he could come only with your permission.

The election results are really wonderful.

LXXVI

Wardha
November 29, 1934

Mirabehn will reach there on Wednesday. Please do what you think fit about receiving her; but send her off the same day. If possible, do come yourself.

We are still undecided about the composition of the Board for the Village Industries Association. The biggest question is who is to be made president. I am inclined to have the head office in Wardha; that is only

to provide a focal point. The number of working centres will have to be quite large, say one for each province, each district and perhaps each taluka [part of a district]. The details will depend on how it works. In Gujarat it will depend on how much of it you consider worth while. But we shall see about it when you come.

LXXVII

Wardha
December 10, 1934

Please send the enclosed letter on to Khansaheb. Mahadev will write about other things. I had no choice after receiving Rajendrababu's letter. There is no telegram yet from Delhi.

LXXVIII

Wardha
December 12, 1934

I received your letter. I send a new statement* for Khansaheb. I think it is the proper thing to do and it should be done. I am writing a letter to him. You can go through it so that I do not have to write anything further. I consider the expression of regret in it to be very important. But the final decision must be yours both about this as well as the whole statement. I cannot say anything definite at this distance. I also feel that a lawyer should be engaged. He should read out the statement. He should not plead guilty or not guilty. The lawyer is not to ask for any reduction in the sentence. He should only analyse the speech if necessary, or else

*To be made by him before the Court trying him for an alleged seditious speech.

just 'watch'. There is no question of cross-examining witnesses. These are only my suggestions; you may accept or reject them as you think fit.

You already know about me. Andrews left for Delhi today on the same errand. He asked me not to go any further until then. Mathuradas will explain it further. There is nothing more to be done about Rajendrababu at present. There is a telegram from Ghanshyamdas that his doctor will not allow him to go until the 30th. So I do not have to be in Delhi on the 20th, unless of course there is something from Andrews. The Working Committee can now meet only in January.

Go to Balvantrai's conference if you think fit. I am not in a position to say anything about it.

Please tell Abhyankar that I wish he will get well soon.

Pyarelal will have arrived. Do write and ask for any more assistance you require. See if you can send Prabhavati to Sarooprani. Pyarelal also should pay her a visit.

LXXIX

Wardha
December 13, 1934

Your letter. . . . I am unhappy about Karnatak. But there is very little we can say in a place where there is some one like Gangadharrao [Deshpande]. Do what you can.

I am deep in the Village Industries Association. Rajaji has been here and he wants to leave today; Jamnalal will come there in a few days.

The rest of the news from Mahadev.

LXXX

Wardha
December 17, 1934

I received your letter. How can we expect lawyers to like Khansaheb's statement? It is enough if our lawyers liked it. From our own standpoint it was the correct thing. How is it possible now to have something which the Government might understand?

Dinabandhu [C.F.Andrews] is due today and will be able to tell us what happened.

I think Jamnalalji will start from here on Thursday. Please stay there at least until he arrives.

LXXXI

Wardha
December 22, 1934

It is difficult to keep Charliebhai [Andrews] quiet. We should even put up with any harm that may result from his activity. But I am quite watchful and have spoken to him plainly. Do not get worried about this. Other people also now know that there is not much significance in his comings and goings.

Kripalani's is another matter. It is a pity that he should have terminated the service of Rajaram. I feel that Krishanadas alone will not be able to cope with the work. But I do not know enough about the affair. Why not write to Kripalani? I have not read his statements. Has he committed any indiscretion in them? If he has, I will write to him too. He will rectify matters as soon as I write.

You kept very good control over the Bombay meeting. I liked your speech very much. All that had to be told to the people.

Why should you be upset by the conduct of a few Muslims? Let us follow our own religion. I wrote to Maulana [Azad] and Dr Ansari about the murders in Sindh and Lahore, and have heard from them in reply; they say that they will do something about it. The whole problem bristles with difficulties. The outlooks are so different; there is therefore nothing to do but to bear it all. It is enough that we stand guard on ourselves.

I shall start for Delhi on the 28th and will be there for a month at the most. The meeting of the Village Industries Association is to be held on January 31. You will of course be coming to Delhi. It will be convenient if the Working Committee meets about January 15, for I would like to get away from Delhi as early as possible.

How is Abhyankar? What about your nose?

LXXXII

Wardha
December 23, 1934

You must have seen the resolutions passed by the Millowners' Association. See that they do not start unnecessary quarrels; if any millowner is likely to listen to you, speak to him. I wrote to Kasturbhai and Chamanbhai.

Please keep mentioning the Village Industries Association wherever you go; for it has great potentialities.

LXXXIII

Wardha
December 26, 1934

Your letter.

I wrote a letter to Gangadharrao. Jamnalalji had sent me a letter from him. I am not very clear about the matter; so I have asked him to come to Delhi. We cannot go on paying money like that. And where is it to come from?

You will have seen Brelvi's article about the murders in Karachi and Lahore. Let's see what I can do about it in Delhi.

There is a letter from Andrews. He is satisfied with the results. I do not attach any significance to his satisfaction. I am expecting him today.

There was an order forbidding Dr Khansaheb to go to the Punjab also and he had to go to Delhi. So he inquired whether the order also covered passing through railway stations in the forbidden territory. The reply was that the order itself was to expire on the 28th. The order forbidding entry into the Frontier Province becomes automatically inoperative on the 29th. So unless its period is extended, Khansaheb will be able to go to the Frontier Province too. Mehertaj will accompany me.

Vaikunth Mehta is here for the Village Industries Association. He will stay on for two days more.

Be very firm about the constructive programme. If the people do not shed idleness and do not do their task, there will be no struggle and no Swaraj either. Cooperation among ourselves is indispensable.

LXXXIV

Wardha
January 30, 1935

I forgot to write that [K. T.] Shah came to see me. He wants to work for the Board but not like the twelfth man. I feel that some use should be made of him. Cannot he be appointed honorary economic adviser or consultant? He does not want any fees.

I had hopes of travelling with you. We had no time at all for talks in Delhi. Still you did well to stay on. There is another letter from Andrews with nothing in it but only castles in the air.

What a contrast between the cold at Delhi and the comparatively warm weather here?

[Sent to the Sardar at Delhi.]

LXXXV

Wardha
February 14, 1935

You see I am giving my right hand a rest. I have your letter as well as the account of the interview [with the Home Member of the Government of India]. Quite a good interview. Keep up the correspondence now.

I hope the nose does not hurt very much. When are you coming here? Please fix a date for it. Discuss things fully with Pyarelal.

I have taken on the kitchen now. My work has changed and increased beyond expectations. But that cannot be a matter for complaint. Mahadev comes tomorrow.

[This and the following were sent to Bombay.]

LXXXVI

Wardha
March 18, 1935

It is difficult to give any advice. Balubhai seems to have got himself somewhat bound down. If he can arrange for prayers, why should he not distribute sweets? There is no catch in the Government demand. However that may be, Balubhai should consult his friends. If every one is firm, they can state that the struggle between the Government and the people is not yet over. The celebrations are not in connection with the birthday of a private individual but with the reign of a ruler. To participate in any celebrations of a rule whose policy they disapprove would be sheer hypocrisy. Civil disobedience has been suspended for the present; so the Government can get anything done by issuing orders but not many would do anything of the sort willingly. The Government could hardly make people join such celebrations against their own will. As far as possible they do not want to hurt anybody's feelings. So Government would be well advised not to compel the popular participation. They will make no fuss about it, and those only who are willing will attend functions. Government should write nothing to the Municipality; the Municipality should not write to the Government or pass a resolution about it.

On the present occasion, even though the Municipality is given some facilities, it cannot take part in the celebrations. Balubhai cannot of course raise the larger question.

This is my general view. If a different attitude is necessary in view of the special conditions in Ahmedabad, I cannot say anything about it.

After this you should guide Balubhai as you think fit.

LXXXVII

Wardha
March 22, 1935

I am enjoying my first day of silence. I have left myself free for talks with Rajkumari [Amrit Kaur]. She has come specially to see me and I must not offend her. She has been here four days but it was only today that I could have a good talk with her.

LXXXVIII

Wardha
March 26, 1935

Mahadev has gone to inspect an institution in Yavatmal. He will be back in the evening. . . .

This hand-made paper is not easy to write upon. I only hope you will find my writing legible.

I think you should accept Ranjit [Pandit]'s invitation. It is a difficult task but you will do well to accept.

I have gone fairly deep into the question of diet. I shall see it right through.

[Letters LXXXVIII — XCVII were sent to Borsad.]

LXXXIX

Wardha
March 30, 1935

I have said yes to no one. I was surprised when I read it in the newspapers. I have no wish to go anywhere just now. If I can have my way, I would prolong my period of silence; it suits me very well, and if necessary I give instructions. But who can go against your wishes? There is no one else who could have dragged me out of here. Even now I would like to carry on like this for a year more, if you would let me. However if you want to take me anywhere, it should be to Borsad; and there too where the plague is at its worst. I will enjoy camping out. We shall go to Ras on foot. My programme should embrace these four: removing untouchability, Khadi, village industries, plague relief. You can hardly call wiping of peasants' tears a programme. Do not take me anywhere else and send me packing after the shortest possible stay. Fix any date after the middle of May. . . .

XC

Wardha

One advantage of silence is that each day's mail is disposed of the same day. That takes at least three hours. The rest of the time I clear up arrears of work.

I went through your leaflet about plague relief. I did not like the sentence about the Government and local self-government. Is it not quite inappropriate just now? It will certainly not improve matters. The work in the U. P. requires careful handling; can you manage to do it without difficulty?

XCI

Wardha
April 2, 1935

Please send me a copy of the reply received by Manilal Kothari about his deportation from British India. I may get some ideas about what should be written to Delhi after I see it. Such insolent replies are as nothing compared with what is still to come. That is why we are to do what we can in a spirit of detachment. That is the only way of conserving our energies. As to getting angry, that is easily done.

It may be safer to work on the assumption that my views on inoculation are worthless. I have continued taking such risks myself as also making others take risks. But on all such occasions I was there on the spot. It would be dangerous to adopt my ideas expressed from a distance. So my advice is to do as Dr Bhaskar [Patel] says. I have already informed him of my views.

[All the Congress volunteers and the people of Borsad received anti-plague inoculations. The Sardar and Manibehn Patel however did not.]

XCII

Wardha
April 4, 1935

You seem to have been badly gripped by fever. There is a letter from Mani. You probably will not be able to eat unhusked rice. Every one here can digest it and so should others too as a rule. But experiments are out of the question in your case. You should only

try to keep yourself going and this should be done by taking suitable diet.

Agatha suggests that Rajaji be sent to Britain. At present however such a visit will be useless, no matter who goes. At a later stage perhaps it might be of some use. What do you think?

XCIII

Wardha
April 5, 1935

I hope you have completely got over the fever. Don't let it stay near you.

It is good you are going to the U. P. No one will feel hurt by what you say. "Your real leader is Nehru. We can stand before you only as his trustees" — that should be the warp, and the woof can be as you like it. It was nice for them to have invited you with such persistence.

I go through all your leaflets carefully. I have started filing them from yesterday. Mani of course must be preserving copies. We also will have a complete set here; please therefore ask her to send copies of Numbers 1 to 6. . . .

Do write a letter to Raja. He seems to have been isolated and is working without respite. It also seems to have become impossible for him to speak his mind to any one.

XCIV

Wardha
April 6, 1935

X has written a similar letter also to me. I have asked him why he keeps asking for money like this.

I am also writing to him not to pester you with such requests. He will come to me if he likes.

You have given a good answer to Chandubhai. I wonder what they find in *sannyasa* [renunciation of the world].

I read Bhulabhai's letter. That's all right. Let him do all he can.

That is enough for today. I had nearly forgotten that it was a day of fasting [being the first day of the National Week].

XCV

Wardha
April 7, 1935

They have scaled the height of insolence in their reply to Manilal Kothari. They act according to their own nature, we according to ours. I feel that the limit of violence is reached in that letter. Is there a limit to our non-violence? Violence has limits but non-violence has none, and that is why it is invincible. Why do I thus philosophise before you? But this is not philosophy. These thoughts pass through my mind and I place them before you. I cannot keep even a single thought hidden from you, can I?

I hope you are recovering your lost strength.

What you say about inoculation is well put. . . .

XCVI

Wardha
April 8, 1935

What else can Ansari do? He cannot say 'No' to any one, rich or poor. Recently he emptied his wallet

for a dacoit woman who turned up before him. Therefore it would only be kind to let him resign from the Parliamentary Board.

I like the idea of doing what work we can without criticising the Government and without asking them for anything.

Let them plunder Ras. We will get every inch of the lands back. When to call me is entirely in your hands. Please do not have a procession for me in any case. Take me to Borsad if you like.

XCVII

Wardha
April 10, 1935

Your leaflets are becoming more impressive. There are many such black holes as Borsad into which fresh air needs to be introduced, and we suffer because we neglect them. What you are doing is the only solid work.

It is good you are eating fresh Mahuda fruit as an experiment. Do let me know the results.

XCVIII

Indore
April 22, 1935

I read your speech [before Allahabad peasants] through. That won't do. The tone you have adopted in criticizing Government policy is not the correct way of going about it at present. Your line really should be as follows : "This is not the time for examining the policy of Government or of the landlords but for turning the searchlight inwards and setting our own house in order. Therefore you should not expect me nowadays to speak about anything other than what we ourselves

must do." After these prefatory remarks you should explain to the tenants what their own duty is without mentioning the Government even once. We might just as well forget all about New Delhi just now. But if this approach does not appeal to you, say what words the Ruler of your heart puts upon your lips.

[This and the following letter were sent to Jabalpur.]

XCIX

Indore
April 22, 1935

I have already written to you once this morning. I had to write so much after that that I cannot any longer write with the right hand.

I wonder if you would consider Munshi for the secretaryship of the Parliamentary Board. Ansari having left, will Bhulabhai become President? Do your best to bring Raja round. Has [Dr] Bidhan [C. Roy] also left?

C

Wardha
May 5, 1935

I have your telegram. I shall be there by the 25th. Will it matter if I come on the 23rd? I may be able to reach there on the 23rd morning if I can see Kamala Nehru in Bombay on the 22nd. Do let me know how long you propose to keep me there. Please keep me as few days as possible.

Raja is very tired. We cannot find fault with him for it. How can we hold back any one by force if his heart is out of it? Who will be there to accept your and Rajendrababu's resignations? Those who remain must carry on

as long as possible. If any other party wishes it may capture the Congress with pleasure.

I hope the virulence of the plague epidemic has abated by now Have you regained your strength?

[This and the two following letters were sent to Borsad.]

CI

Wardha
May 15, 1935

I do not regard your joke about "the number of crows in Delhi" as proper. What will it profit the people? We are not campaigning at present.

I am bogged up in work just now. Andrews is here. Ceresole and [Miss Ellen] Wilkinson came yesterday. Others also will be coming. I will only just manage to get ready on the 21st. It seems impossible to bring Mahadev with me.

CII

Wardha
May 18, 1935

. . . . Your tribute to the late Mohanlal Pandya is fully deserved and your memories of past events are vivid. But mourning over such losses is fruitless. Colleagues come and they go. You feel that they only go and do not come. Even so, what does it matter? God never leaves our side, does He? If He is, every one else is; and when He is not, even a hundred co-workers are useless, like a body without the soul. Therefore we must not lament over departed friends but only do the maximum of work we are capable of.

I will not be able to get away before the 21st. I shall reach Bombay on the morning of the 22nd. The 20th is a Monday; and I shall have to stay on for the following day. Only Ba will probably come with me. And Mirabehn if she insists upon coming. I will take goat's milk, *margosa* leaves and local fruit. You are to order nothing from Bombay. My diet here is just the same. I take tamarind water instead of lemon juice and crushed *margosa* leaves in place of green leafy vegetables. At present I also eat mangoes from the garden here. I have not yet tasted any from Bombay. I may in Bombay but certainly not in Borsad.

Mahadev must stay here for the present. If necessary I may send him when I return here. More when we meet.

CIII

Wardha
May 20, 1935

I cannot stop thinking about you. I shall bring Mahadev, leaving Kaka here to deputise for him. The thought that if you needed Mahadev now there was not much point in sending him later kept worrying me. So I spoke about it to Kaka, who agreed to undertake the responsibility.

Other things we can talk about when we meet or rather later in Borsad. On Wednesday there will be so many visitors that we cannot hope to have even a word with each other.

[This was sent to Bombay.]

CIV

Wardha
June 4, 1935

I really wanted to write to you from Surat but had no time for it. It was impossible during the journey and I just could not manage even yesterday. The return journey proved quite trying. In Bhusaval we got sitting accommodation with difficulty and spent the night sitting up.

Have your intestines properly treated immediately. The trouble is manageable and you should get well soon. Lose no time on it.

Kanuga has sent mangoes under instructions from you. I suppose Mridula sends them to Gaffarkhan [in Sabarmati Prison].

[This was sent to Mount Abu.]

CV

Wardha
June 9, 1935

What can we do about Quetta? As they are keeping out every one, there is no question of any one of us going there. Wherever the injured or the destitute go, they are being helped by the people. There is hardly anything more we can do. Yesterday I got a telegram similar to that sent to Rajendrababu. Now we can only remain silent.

I do not regard the change* at the India office as a favourable sign. You must have read the testimonial from Sapru Saheb. It is no use fretting about it. He had

*Appointment of Sir Samuel Hoare as Secretary of State for India.

condemned a bill similar to this before and now he welcomes it.

Rajendrababu is to come on the 12th. He will be here for four hours.

[Letters CV-CXXVI were sent to Bombay.]

CVI

Wardha
June 15, 1935

When it came up during conversation with Balvantrai, I told him that you support the refusal of Devchandbhai [Uttamchand Parekh] to call a meeting of the Working Committee of the Kathiavad Political Conference and that I held this decision was sound. Balvantrai says that no one wishes to transgress the limits imposed in Porbandar. I said that if he can give you an assurance about this you may withdraw your objection. Even apart from this I have advised him to talk things over with you.

He and others are here in connection with the situation in Sikar*. My views about it will be communicated to you by Balvantrai. Get well soon.

CVII

Wardha
June 17, 1935

. . . . If now you live a few days on juicy fruits, you will find drugs unnecessary. You must have an enema, if you are constipated. It is nothing but tyranny if you refuse to use a commode; for it is convenient for both the patient and the attendant. Do start using it soon.

*Where the State subjects had to offer Satyagraha.

Andrews is to come tomorrow and will be here for a couple of days. It is fairly crowded here these days. Kumarappa's brother Bharatan has arrived. . . .

Vasumati was about to leave Bochasan, but she may stay on if Shivabhai really needs her there. I do not expect to receive letters written with your own hand for the present. This illness must go quickly.

Come when you have fully recovered. Rajendrababu is definitely coming. Jamnalal will also be here in July. It will be cooler then; that intense heat has already passed.

CVIII

Wardha
June 21, 1935

I am not impatient. But I do not favour receiving treatment from Vaidyas [practitioners of the Indian system of medicine]. Theirs is a haphazard system of medicine. It may by chance hit its aim or miss it. It is not worth while adopting it even to cure oneself. . . . Vaidyas do have some drugs but if these are ineffective, you return to where you started from. I should shudder to put you under such physicians. I see that in the end even Malaviyaji and Motilalji had to resort to doctors. But if you are already well, there is nothing more to be said.

Do send for Mahadev when you want him.

CIX

Maganwadi
Wardha
June 27, 1935

I write this to you in case Mahadev is not there. I got your statement about Borsad plague relief and went through it. I waited for the second post but nothing more came in. Ba also brought no letter with her; so I sent the telegram.

I did not like the statement at all. Instead of stating facts, it offers a mixture of facts and arguments. I found the very first paragraph unacceptable and so I telegraphed. The post was received just now at 4 p.m. I see that you like the idea of our appointing a *committee. This pleased me because I think such a committee should prove very helpful to us. At least the doctors' opinion can be regarded as independent. I need not write any further because you have already found the proposal acceptable. I wish I could see in advance any statement which may be made about this. If Mahadev is in possession of all the details, he can draft the statement here; otherwise you can ask him to stay for a day more.

CX

Wardha
July 3, 1935

Your letter. Mahadev has unnecessarily frightened you as well as himself. All that I did was to warn Harilal‡

*To inquire into the Government's charge that the plague relief operations on behalf of the Congress in Borsad had been unscientific.

‡Gandhiji's eldest son.

that he should not play any tricks on me and that if he did, he might lose me. He seems to have been up to something because I am informed that he has run away. His running away will not shock me at all. Even formerly he used to wander from place to place. Seeing some outward signs of a change in his way of life, I did have some hopes but the pretence could not last very long. Please do not be anxious. I will take no hasty action; and now no action is called for. Otherwise my health is excellent and I take good care of it. Finally of course it is God who disposes. There will be no trouble so long as He wants to use me as an instrument of service; and when the time comes, there will be nothing that can ward it off. India is bound to make progress in any case. I see no reason for disappointment. God's acts are always beneficent.

It is a good idea to have Wardha as your headquarters after you have recovered.

CXI

Wardha
July 23, 1935

What is going on in Lahore? Can you make anything of it? Who is to blame? Insurance firms are coming up like mushrooms. I do not like them at all, but there is little we can do. It is a terrible thing that they also cash on the name of the Congress. But what can we do except looking on helplessly?

CXII

Wardha
August 11, 1935

Your letter. We should print the entire correspondence from the beginning to now after obtaining permission

from the Government. The letter about the appointment of the committee should also be printed. Having printed all this, we should be busy with tendering evidence. It is all right if Lalubhai's health is good enough to stand the strain. But I have my doubts whether he will be able to go deep into the affair. I would be glad if Kunzru comes. It should be enough to have Gilder and Bahadurji. Never mind if the third member is not equally competent.

CXIII

Wardha
August 15, 1935

. . . . Detain Mahadev there as long as you need him. I shall manage here somehow. Rajkumari and Khurshed* are helping me according to their capacity. Rajkumari disposes of most of the letters in English. She is to leave here on the 21st. Khurshedbehn will be here for some time.

I am all for your being cured of this jaundice even if it means a course of fourteen doses instead of seven. What is begun should be followed to the end.

CXIV

Wardha
August 16, 1935

Incidents like this are enough to make one lose faith in God. They should make us only still more watchful of our steps.

*Granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji.

CXV

Wardha
August 18, 1935

Kishorlal told me yesterday that you had a severe attack of piles and that an operation was necessary. This is the outcome of accumulated dirt in the system. Send me full details. It is not advisable to have an operation in the present state of your health. It would therefore be a good idea to consult Gaurishankar or Dr. [Dinshah] Mehta. Many avoid an operation merely by keeping their stomach in good order. You have already reposed considerable trust in an Ahmedabad quack; so you might as well place yourself under the treatment of a naturopath. We simply cannot afford to have you in indifferent health.

CXVI

Wardha
August 20, 1935

The personnel of the committee is quite satisfactory. The sooner it finishes its work, the better. . . .

Morarji and Chandubhai are reaching here on the 25th.

CXVII

Wardha
August 23, 1935

I drafted the terms of reference for the *committee yesterday and they are being sent with Vaikunthbhai. I have also talked to him about it.

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*See CIX.

I am returning the cutting from *Sanj*. This sort of agitation will go on; it will stop as soon as the committee starts functioning.

I am sending Kumarappa to Bombay. Please have him examined by [Dr] Jivraj [Mehta]. Do let me know if you have arrived at any decision regarding the gift contemplated by Velchand [Banker]. I still feel that we should have some wells constructed according to his wishes and the balance should be spent only on village uplift. . . .

CXVIII

Wardha
August 24, 1935

Andrews has fallen ill; so he has stayed on. . . .

I enclose Devadas' *telegram. I have wired back that he should take complete rest, and observe a fast and thus be out of danger. Raja is sure to go and Ba and Manu are there already. And Devadas is under Ansari's treatment; so what more could we ask for? I am not worrying about it.

CXIX

Wardha
August 27, 1935

I came to know about little Baba's tonsils from Mani's letter. How is it that so young a child has got such large tonsils ? What can be the cause? Can the doctors say anything about it?

Darbar [Gopaldas Desai] and [Dr] Bhaskar are ill. How do you propose to meet this situation? Do you think Mahadev is required there?

*He was down with typhoid fever.

Morarji and Chandulal will stay for two or three days more. Swami Yoganand from America is here.

Morarji will come there in a couple of days. You may then detain him.

CXX

Wardha
September 5, 1935

Mahadev left here yesterday to see Jawaharlal in Allahabad. But it seems from a telegram received from Jawaharlal today that he is himself to leave this evening [for Switzerland to see Kamala Nehru] and so Mahadev may not be able to see him.

The reply about plague relief work given by the Bombay Government is made as full of venom as possible. What they mean to say is clear enough. There will be an attempt to suppress every measure of self-help that is started by the people on their own initiative. I feel that we should not now publish the correspondence. We should publish only that part which explains the circumstances in which the committee was appointed as a preface to its report. Is that right? It is desirable that the committee completes its work quickly.

I hope Baba is now well. At present we have some meeting or other everyday.

CXXI

Wardha
September 9, 1935

Please go through the enclosed letter. You will perhaps recognise the writer. See if anything can be done for him. I hope your burden is now lighter than before.

I hear rumours about an indirect breach of the Yeravda Pact on the part of the Government. Wait and see.

CXXII

Wardha
September 13, 1935

I have received your letter. Rajaji is sitting by my side. I read out your order* to him. He says that he must leave on the 17th at the latest. His daughter will be coming to Madras, as her son who was not well is waiting for her. He imagines you want to induce him to wear the crown of †thorns; if so, he says it will be a vain attempt. He says he gave no assurance to Bhulabhai. He is in no condition to wear that crown, for he is both mentally and physically tired out. I have asked Jawaharlal with his consent. Nevertheless see if you can manage to reach here by Monday. For he must be allowed to go on Tuesday. The weather here is bad at present.

Mira is better but her temperature has been rising since two o'clock. The reason why I wanted to know the price of fruit in Bombay was that if it was available here at about the same price, we could arrange to buy it here.

You have misunderstood the Sindi affair. We do not want to impose anything on its people. We only want to render silent service. More of this when we meet. If we do not meet soon I shall write to you in detail. I will do nothing in a hurry. . . .

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*The suggestion that he should be detained in Wardha for a week.

†Presidentship of the Congress.

The less argument there is in the committee report, the better. There should be no adjectives at all. Their decision on the points at issue and suggestions for the future should combine to make it a wholly innocuous pamphlet. If they want to suppress even that, let them. This is what I think.

CXXIII

Wardha

September 15, 1935

I was worrying over Manilal Kothari's telegram. In the end, I wrote him a letter, a copy of which is enclosed. It is quite in order for you to have detained Mahadev there. I am going more and more rural everyday. My bullock cart wading through several inches of mud has no notion of time whatever.

CXXIV

Wardha

October 31, 1935

I enclose Parikshitlal's letter which you appear to have seen. I was perhaps wrong in endorsing his move, but before I correct myself I must have a clearer idea of the situation. My feeling is that if Harijans are beaten up in a place and if their complaint is not attended to, they should leave that place and we should encourage them to do so. I have accepted and followed this policy for many years, both in the case of individuals as well as groups. It was publicly declared in 1906 and embodied in writing in 1908, and such has been my advice all along. I made the same recommendation when Harijans were terrorised in Talaja and in a village near Merath. In Talaja [Shri Prabhashankar] Pattani Saheb saw to it that justice was done. In the

place near Merath there was a long drawn case which the Harijans lost. The lawyers and other advisers were not very enthusiastic and the matter remained hanging in the air.

There may be special reasons in Kavitha against a general migration. However, where is the harm if all the Harijans or some of them come away from Kavitha after giving a notice to the local caste Hindus of their intention?

If you do not agree with me on the point, please explain your standpoint to me. I do not know if there is anything special about the situation in Kavitha. You have already been there; so you should be able to throw much light on it. The Kavitha chapter should not be taken as closed. We do not hear of things of this sort happening elsewhere except perhaps in Tamilnad where some such tension exists at times between Nadars and Harijans. We shall have to find some way out.

Valchand [Hirachand] is thinking of coming here with Ambedkar.

If it is necessary for you to be operated upon, the sooner you are through all that, the better, unless of course the doctors think otherwise.

Devdhar is on his death-bed in Bhajekar's hospital. Write to him.

CXXV

Wardha
November 14, 1935

I hope you are now* fit enough to talk. I went through your letter to Ambedkar. It is attractively worded, but at present it is not likely to impress

*The Sardar was operated upon for piles on the 9th.

him at all. He cannot help abusing me; so how can he avoid letting you have your share? Here as in London, there are many influences acting behind him. The pity of it is that this problem has been allowed to assume unduly large proportions because of his threats. Even that would not worry me, but it is being exploited not for constructive but evil purposes. People are now trying to placate him instead of trying to work hard for the actual eradication of untouchability. Such is the atmosphere in which we have to work; there is an exhibition of terrorism and weakness wherever you go.

Why don't you take some steps about Patdi? Can your secretary go and take the chair in any meeting he likes without your consent?

I hope you have now an idea of my programme for Gujarat in January. I reach Ahmedabad on the 12th and return to Wardha on the 28th, which is the day fixed for Radhakrishna [Bajaj] and Anasuya [Jaju]'s marriage. Thus I can give to Gujarat 15 days at the most. Please arrange whatever is possible during that period.

CXXVI

Wardha
December 11, 1935

I am writing to you after many days. I may even be disobeying doctors' instructions in doing so. Jamnalalji is nervous. But you must not worry about me. Come only when you would have come even otherwise. I am all right. My, your and everyone else's life thread is in the hands of Mirabai's Valam [Beloved, i.e. God]. We should go wherever He leads us. He is hardly likely to let any one behave as he will.

CXXVII

Wardha
January 4, 1936

I am very unhappy about not being able to come there, but I could not agree to the hard terms the doctors would have imposed on me. If my health is as bad as they think, it is just as well that I do not go. Now I wish that you would come here in a few days after completing the collections for Harijans. Also bring Rajendrababu. *You will probably collect the necessary funds in Ahmedabad alone.

CXXVIII

Segaon‡
May 1, 1936

Mahadev cannot start today. One of the reasons for this has been stated in my telegram. The other is that he has to send matter for the week's *Harijan*. If this is done before he goes, you can detain him even longer. Mahadev will tell you all about this.

I should warn you that if you do not bring your health to normal, there will be a quarrel.

The climate of this village is really good. The night was beautifully cool. There are fairly good arrangements about the meals etc. More about that at leisure. Dr Ambedkar and Valchand met me once and are coming again.

---

* Gandhiji had intended to make collections for Harijans during his projected visit to Gujarat. But meanwhile he fell ill and could not leave Wardha. The responsibility for collecting funds thus devolved on the Sardar, who collected 50,000 Rs in Ahmedabad in a couple of days, the amount required for the time being Rs 30,000.

‡ The village near Wardha where Gandhiji lived for the rest of his life; later named Sevagram.

CXXIX

Segaon
June 13, 1936

I have written to Mangaldas [Pakvasa] and if there is time, Mahadev will enclose a copy. I hope you had a comfortable journey and also trust you will come here soon after finishing the tour. Do keep up the habit of daily walks.

CXXX

Segaon
July 28, 1936

You are enduring quite an amount of pain. I expect the operation on the nose has been performed by now.

Have all the rest you need. Never mind if you cannot come here. My health is quite good.

CXXXI

Segaon
August 1, 1936

So the operation is over. I hope it is successful.

You must have received a copy of my reply to Rajaram. If you have not written to him already, I suggest you write as follows :

'Your letter does not contain any new point requiring an answer; therefore I have nothing to add to my first letter.'

Do not be in any hurry to leave the hospital and do not start working until you have had sufficient rest.

CXXXII

Segaon

November 24, 1936

Here at least no one seems to agree with you. I for one like Jawaharlal's *statement. He could hardly have said less and we could hardly expect him to say anything more. There is no question of remaining in the Cabinet this time; we shall see about it when it comes up. I did not want to send the draft for your statement at all. But I was hardly the sort of person who could refuse it to Mathuradas. After all he is a nephew and on this ground he has got me to do many things. If you do not like the draft, write out another, and if you think it your duty to enter into competition, do so. You may change the draft where you think it necessary. Whatever you do must be done with confidence, because we shall have to cross many deserts.

Improve your health. See if you can pass through Wardha on your way back from the Frontier.

CXXXIII

Segaon

February 5, 1937

I am resting my right hand, for I must keep it ready for ‡Monday.

You are driving yourself too hard, but who can reprimand or bring the Sardar [Commander] to book? If you damage your health in any way, however, you will have many unpleasant things to hear. This much by way of preface.

* As regards his election as president of the Faizpur Congress.

‡ Monday being the day of silence, Gandhiji could not dictate anything and had to write with his own hand.

Chandrashankar wrote to Mahadev that you did not like my letter to Polak. A letter had to be given to Polak. I was bound to reply to his letter. If he asks for a letter, even that has to be given. I did not know that he would publish it immediately. But the publication has not done us any harm. And even supposing harm is done, it can only be momentary. For the publicity received by anything which is proper can never be harmful. . . .

When are you coming here? Where are you holding the Congress session? The preparations for it should start immediately.

CXXXIV

Segaon, Wardha
May 4, 1937

Where do you propose to take me? Wherever you take me, you will have to provide for a large number of persons, as I shall not be able to prevent any one from coming. I do not mind it at all, but we must think of those in whose bungalow we are put up. Mirabehn has already served a notice that she is to accompany me this time wherever I go. I do not feel that I need seaside air myself. You should definitely keep me in Bardoli as long as you like; so also in Surat. If you do not object to our becoming a large party, do not assume that I would be bothered by it. I would of course be very reluctant to become a heavy burden. This is the list up to now :

Ba, Kano, Mira, Pyarelal, Mahadev, Radhakrishna, Kanu, Manharlal, Sharada.

I hope you are taking sufficient rest.

CXXXV

Wardha
June 19, 1937

. . . . I read about the affair in Broach. Such lies will continue to be told. What other type of behaviour could you expect them to adopt towards some one like Dinkarrao?

The Working Committee can meet from the 26th to the 29th. That gives us sufficient time, and no doubt the earlier it is held, the better it will be.

CXXXVI

Segaon,
June 21, 1937

I went through your letter and Jawahar's reply. It appears that Nariman will himself fall into the pit he is digging for others.

I have received a long letter from Lothian. I have not yet been able to read it. I hope you are sufficiently recovered to move about* in the house.

CXXXVII

Wardha
July 11, 1937

Do not worry about the Nariman affair. It will soon come to an end.

CXXXVIII

Segaon
July 14, 1937

If there was doubt or fear about the Maulana in your mind, you should not have sent that telegram

* The Sardar was unable to walk on account of a *babul* thorn in the foot.

about him. I saw that by sending it we would be spared a lot of trouble. I still think that this action has done us nothing but good. You will remember that I gave a similar warning to Jawaharlal too, and the responsibility of issuing the notice was cast on him. If there is no response in your mind to the suggestions I keep throwing out, it is not right for you to accept them.

CXXXIX

Segaon
July 15, 1937

You will of course be able to manage about Bhulabhai, Munshi etc. I am not much use there. It will certainly be fine if Gilder joins the ministry.

If there is no reply from the Maulana and if there is no time at all to wait for it, either of two things can be done. You may appoint some one who is best fitted for the post, or you could announce in so many words that whoever is nominated by the Maulana would be appointed. We already know about his dilatory ways. Why not send a telegram to Jawarharlal so as either to get Maulana's approval or to obtain some other suggestion from Jawaharlal?

You seem to be sending your* brothers away fairly early. They will keep our own places ready somewhere. When God feels that our work here is done, He will take us away in a moment.

* Referring to the death of Vallabhbhai's eldest brother.

CXL

Wardha
July 17, 1937

You are needlessly unhappy or angry. Your statement about the Nariman affair should have been issued early. What more could we expect from the members of the Working Committee beyond their resolution? What remedy is there against attacks made in a spirit of malice? If there is to be any harm, it will in the end come only to Nariman. I quite agree that many would be injured if we surrender to hooliganism. But there is no question of such surrender on your or anybody else's part. I enclose a copy of my letter to Nariman and Sir Govindrao [Madgaonkar]'s letter.

Do not lose patience and peace of mind.

CXLI

Segaon
July 19, 1937

This question of fixing the salary of Congress ministers at Rs 500 plus house rent deserves serious consideration. I do not see any point in making a distinction between a secretary and a minister. But let me know if you differ from me.

CXLII

Segaon
July 22, 1937

Some words seem to have been omitted in* Thakkarbapa's award. Have you been through it? If the missing

* Thakkarbapa was appointed as arbitrator in the dispute between the Broach Municipality and its sweepers.

words do not change the meaning, it appears to me that according to Bapa's decision the [Broach] Municipality is bound to employ 185 men. I am still waiting for Dinkarrao's letter, so that he may inform me what interpretation is put upon the document by lawyers. There is no question of my being generous. If the interpretation about 185 is correct, what else can be done? I would like you to read the award through if you have the time. I enclose a copy. I am not in a hurry, but the matter should not be allowed to hang fire either.

CXLIII

Segaon
July 24, 1937

Regarding Nariman, I keep doing whatever I can think of. You should now forget all about it. Let them launch any sort of attack. You are not worried about your reputation. कोओी निन्दो, कोओी वन्दो, कोओी कैसो कहो रे।*

. . . There is a difference in our ways of getting such things done. That is all that I have to say. Who can say which method is better? A comparison cannot be made even from the results. I would not abandon my method even if it yielded no results at all or the wrong results. Similarly you can not give up your method. It is a matter of how we feel about it. One can only do what suits him best. I do not expect that the position can in any way be changed by my letters.

My health is quite good. I need some rest and I take it.

* Some may abuse you; some may adore you; let them all say what they like.

CXLIV

Segaon
August 1, 1937

The telegram for you can only be sent tomorrow, and Mahadev will despatch it if possible. My statement cannot be issued so soon, but only at the psychological moment. You please have a look at the letter I wrote yesterday. I cannot yet decide whether or not the whole correspondence should be published. My permitting or not permitting the publication is not the point; the question is whether it fits in with our way of looking at things.

CXLV

Segaon
August 10, 1937

This note will be handed to you by Saiyad Saheb of *Siasat*. He had with him four notes from Dr Satyapal; one of them is for you. I told him that there was nothing that I could do, but that he should see you; and you would hear him attentively and if you felt like doing it, you might perhaps be able to help him. Please hear everything he has to say and do what you think fit.

CXLVI

Segaon
August 22, 1937

Herewith a letter from Jayanti [Parekh]. I wrote to him that it would have been better if he had written to you direct. Please send him a reply.

Please do not worry about my health. I do take some rest now and shall be taking more in future.

CXLVII

Segaon,
September 26, 1937

I just keep reading your letters. What really surprises me is that you did not break down during this strenuous tour lasting five days. When two hard-working types get together* they wear each other out. Weak and thin people generally manage quite well in each other's company. Even a strong man has some consideration for a feeble companion. But when you two got together, there was no telling which of you two was the tougher. Therefore your tour must have been remarkable. In any case you have discharged your debt to the Kamala Nehru memorial. The collections also are satisfactory, considering the times we are going through. Was the Ahmedabad millowners' contribution worthy of them?

Please try to forget the Nariman affair. You have transferred your worries to me and I have passed them on to Bahadurji. He seems to be a diligent worker. He reads every letter daily, finding the time for it and takes notes. This reading alone will take two weeks. He has a heap of briefs lying with him and he gives some time to this matter regarding it as another legal case. Therefore let the matter proceed in due course, and don't mind how much time it takes. Just don't read the attacks in the newspapers.

In my view the heavy expenditure going to be incurred for the Congress session [at Haripura] will indicate only our bankruptcy. I see our destruction in the present profusion of funds with us. Our show will

* Refers to a joint tour of Gujarat with Pandit Nehru.

be one of borrowed feathers as there will be nothing created by the sweat of the volunteers. This is not a criticism of what you are doing but a prediction of our future, a saddening picture of our present position. I have written a letter to Ramdas [Gulati] in a similar strain though in different words. Whatever happens, this letter should not make you indifferent as regards the preparations at Haripura. You please carry on according to your lights. So much by way of preface.

The [Haripura] Congress camp should be a village, and not a city. Let rural arts have full scope there. But the development of art makes demands upon the head and the heart, never on the purse. Therefore please do not let them spend a farthing on decorations. I think that in the sweetmeat shops and tea stalls too only cow's milk or ghee should be allowed to be used. This means that they must either buy their stores from us or their purchases from outside must be made under our supervision, and any money spent by us for this should be recovered at the time of issuing permits. We must help sweetmeat makers and restaurant keepers to set up their establishments but they must obey our regulations.

Now about Darbar [Gopaldas]. We have to regain possession of Darbar's village not for his but for our prestige. Darbar has lost Dhasa but he has gained the district of Kheda as his kingdom. No one had heard about the Darbar of Dhasa, but every one knows the Darbar of Kheda. Therefore, Ravjibhai [Manibhai Patel]'s letter did not impress me at all. It only could have made me angry, but at my age it would be wrong to get angry. In any case he is at a distance; so I am suppressing my anger. We are more concerned about Dhasa than he can be. Further his anxiety arises out of his friendship

with Darbar. But we would have taken interest in the matter even if Darbar was not our friend but only an ordinary co-worker. If we had not, we would have been nowhere in the Congress. However all these are mere platitudes. It would appear from the information given by Ravjibhai that we should make a move at once. I had hoped to give the new ministry some breathing time. But now I feel that either you as president of the Gujarat Congress Committee or its secretary should write to the Chief Minister that he should take up the Darbar's case as a matter of prestige for the Congress and get the Governor to recommend that Dhasa be returned to Darbar. I believe it will be given as soon as it is asked for, and I shall not have to intervene.

CXLVIII

Segaon
October 9, 1937

I just went through your reply to Nimbkar. I did not like it at all. I can see much intolerance in it. I think it would be difficult to prove what you have written about Nimbkar. Where was the necessity of writing all that? The attack on the *Chronicle* is not at all becoming. 'Obvious reasons' are those of which every one is aware. I myself do not know that the *Chronicle* is against you; even if it is, what reason could it have that is known to every one? What was the relevance of saying so? I am afraid you have invited antagonism by your own action.

Munshi will tell you about Vaikunth [Mehta]. If Morarji can release him from his work on the moratorium and co-operatives for three months you can certainly take him.

CXLIX

Segaon
[Written between October 1 and 15]

I do not think that I would see Jinnah for the present at any rate. Jawaharlal does not wish that I should.

It appears I may have to go to Calcutta. Jawaharlal insists on my going. There are also invitations from Bengal. Subhas too has written. If I go I can also meet the detenus. So we shall certainly meet in Calcutta, if not *en route*.

If a check cannot be placed on the disruptive tendencies which have now appeared, I feel that the game is as good as lost. We must leave no stone unturned to maintain control. If they will not listen to us, we can only retire ourselves. It has no meaning for us if a few people have control over a limited part of the present organization. Good work is possible only if there is unified control on the entire set-up. We will do what we can to maintain this.

I quite forgot to write about Sadanand. He was here, and said he wanted to start a newspaper again and to establish a news agency. I declined to give him the slightest encouragement and advised him not to make the same mistake twice. Whether he goes in for it or not, he must, I told him, forget me. He has agreed to this but he does not seem to have repented in any way. My view is that it is not wise to start a new English newspaper in Bombay.

Nimbkar has to be given a reply. I have only said that I could not take any action on the basis of newspaper reports.

CL

Slip containing Gandhiji's part of the dialogue on the day of silence

[Segaon]
[November 1, 1937]

I have come to the conclusion that it would be better if all got out [from the Congress Working Committee]. You should resign even if in the end others do not. Jamnalal is sure to come out. After that who remains? It will be a bankruptcy, won't it? Bhulabhai will get out. But there is nothing against your coming out. I do not think it absolutely necessary to have the Maulana's support. If you do not come out, you may later have to go out in spite of yourself. I have seen that Subhas is unsteady but no one except him can be the president [of the Haripura Congress]. I was thinking about it last night and again this morning. Others may do as they wish. But I feel certain that you should go out of it. If the provincial bodies will not look after themselves, nothing can be done and everything will be lost.

I shall try to find out about Nariman, but they may not want to move in the matter. However, what do the other members say? What do Dev and Patwardhan think? And Bhulabhai? It does not matter if the question is brought up by one member only. The evidence is clear.

You must make it clear that it would not be possible to remain in the Committee in view of such extreme divergence of opinion. The entire thinking about this

must be done by you alone. No one else's wisdom will be useful here. I see only harm in your continuing in the Committee. It may be possible to save Gujarat but even that might go. There is destruction in allowing oneself to be carried off by the current.

I have already suggested that all of you should hand in your resignations. Get together today and confer about it. What was done today certainly was not proper; similarly improper are many other things. Let him form his own cabinet by all means. It would be improper for him to hand in his resignation also. That also must be made clear to him. Rajendrababu is coming here today. After hearing about all this, I feel that all of you should resign. I do not have either the time or the strength for it and just manage to keep my head above the water. You yourself should talk this over tonight.

CLI

Vitthalnagar, Haripura
February 20, 1938

Devadas complained against your speech today. Then Jayaprakash came and spoke about it in great distress. I think your speech was unduly severe. You cannot win over the socialists like that. If you think it was a mistake, get special permission from Subhas to go to the rostrum and speak so as to wipe their tears and to make them smile. We should never return blow for blow. Forgiveness is the ornament of the strong. They will not hurt others by their speech. I really wanted to talk about this but there was no time for it.

CLII

Segaon
April 18, 1938

Pyarelal has already written to you yesterday. If you come here we can talk a few things over. But never mind if you cannot manage it. The question of confiscated lands in Gujarat was raised. I think it is impossible to do anything further about Nagpur. Let the matter take its normal course. The entire policy deserves careful reconsideration. I have to come there on the 28th in any case to see Jinnahbhai. I am thinking of returning the same day.

Did you go and see Jalbhai [A. D. Naoroji] ? Do you write to him?

I want you not to take me to the seaside. Your Committee will meet in Wardha on the 6th and the 7th May. I am really keeping good health. Mahadev should be back on the 20th or the 21st.

CLIII

Segaon
April 23, 1938

Mahadev should arrive this evening. I hope to reach there on the morning of the 28th. I may meet the Governor also the same day. I shall be ready to see him at nine, or half past.

I talked to the Viceroy about Orissa, the lands in Kheda, detenus etc.

It should be possible to spend a few days in Gujarat any other time. I shall perhaps have to go to the Frontier Province in May. I have telegraphed Khansaheb today. We shall know more when Mahadev arrives.

My health is quite good for the present at any rate.

Please go through my statement on Jinnah. If I do not meet him, it is sure to be misinterpreted.

CLIV

Segaon
July 18, 1938

Sharif came and sat with me for an hour and a half, when he showed me the correspondence exchanged by him with you. He asked you if you wrote something to Sir Manmath [Nath Mukerji] about him and you did not reply to it. I of course told him that the Sardar would never write to Sir Manmath. Nevertheless I agreed to make sure by asking you. Do therefore please let me know.

I have drafted the reply to be given to Jinnahbhai. You will see it when you come.

Mahadev will give you the rest of the news.

CLV

Segaon
July 19, 1938

Both these gentlemen are from the Quilon Bank and wish to tell you their story and also to get your advice. Do give them some time. Theirs is a tragic story.

They also want to see Sir Purushottamdas. I have given them a note for him too.

CLVI

Segaon
August 12, 1938

If you want the A. I. C. C. to meet in Bombay, do invite it there by all means, but not in Delhi. Call me

to Bombay only if my presence is really necessary. Wardha is of course the best for the purpose. If you agree, do consult Jamnalal by telegram. From the standpoint of convenience I suppose Bombay is better. You need not worry about accommodating me. It will be better if the notice convening the A. I. C. C. is issued early. Do just as you think fit. The more I think of it, my own mind inclines more towards Bombay. Allahabad should also be considered, as the A. I. C. C. has never met there so for. But this is only for you to think over.

CLVII

Segaon
August 15, 1938

I was quite pleased to see that you went to Rajkot. It will be like this all the time luck is with you. Chudgar is misguided. Let them do as they please. If the people in the States have guts in them, do not try to run before they can walk and continue their struggle peacefully without expecting help from outside, they are certain to win in the end. And if Congress does not give up its policy vis-a-vis the States its influence is bound to increase within the States.

I knew you were going to fall ill. You may be Sardar [Commander] to others, but you do not seem to be any better than your own slave. The true Sardar is he who has control over his own self. If you are punctual in everything and regulate your daily life, you will live long. Do not dismiss this only as the pot calling the kettle black. Even Mahadev had to learn this the hard way.

CLVIII

Segaon
September 4, 1938

How long can you subsist on drugs? What kingdom do you propose to conquer soon? Take it easy. Do what you can cope with. Take care of your own health; otherwise you will be guilty of *himsa* [violence].

CLIX

Peshawar
October 13, 1938

I am having a good time. Even you have not succeeded in giving me such complete rest. The weather is fine. There are heaps of fruit. At present Khansaheb lives to look after me.

Mahadev is all right. He went to Simla and it is all for the good. But you are free to induce him to go elsewhere.

The chapter has been closed as far as Jinnah is concerned. His letter is no better. We had better stop after saying what we have to say independently of him. Please think over the draft I have made and let me know what you think about it. We must publish some such thing fairly soon.

Coltman's opinion [as regards Vitthalbhai Patel's will] is excellent. The only proper thing which remains to be done is for the executor to get a summons issued and bring the case to an end. I am however sending this opinion to Subhas. . . .

What C. P. is doing is very crooked. Ramachandran cannot do anything by himself. Those people are firm.

If they let you go there you should go and iron out things. C. P. will lose his reputation completely after this affair. I keep getting a large number of letters.

As for the rest, Pyarelal will write to you.

CLX

Kohat
October 21, 1938

I have replied to your telegram. You will return triumphant even if you go to Travancore as a private individual. Visit the prisoners in jail. Many lies are being circulated. I have got many telegrams sent by the State Congress denying violence by its members. There are other telegrams which say that violence is definitely being resorted to. The truth can be known only if some one goes there and sees for himself. You know the advice I have given. They should either withdraw the accusations made against C.P. or make them the major point at issue. If they take the latter course, there can be no Satyagraha for it. The decision in this matter must be taken by the local people. If C.P. starts a prosecution after bringing outside judges, they should take up the challenge. For the struggle will be crippled if they do not. You will have seen my latest advice. If violence is being resorted to for any reason whatever, the civil disobedience movement must be suspended even without arranging any truce. Every one thrown into prison should stay on there. Everything else except the civil disobedience may go on. However when you go there you will do what seems to you best, after first meeting Ramachandran and later the prisoners. . . .

Why should you resign from Gandhi Seva Sangh? Jamnalalji is not at present in good health. Even if he

resigns he is certain to continue doing some work. Your resignation will in no way mend matters.

CLXI

Segaon
November 19, 1938

Please go through the agreement I have drafted after conversations with Anantrai and Nanabhai. If you approve of it, the Thakoresaheb should act on it and the Satyagraha movement be called off. The names of the members on the committee should be fixed by you in consultation with Bhai Anantrai; the representatives of the subjects should have a majority on it. I think we should feel satisfied if this much is done. The agreement does not refer to responsible government in so many words but it is implicit in the terms of my draft.

CLXII

Segaon,
November 28, 1938

I enclose the letter from Bhavnagar. I have telegraphed that they should await my letter before sending another party of Satyagrahis. I feel that the participation of students in this way is quite unjustified.

Further I am not happy about people sending parties of Satyagrahis from various places outside Rajkot. It is quite contrary to our policy. Such parties do not want self-government and they will not get it. Their going only adds to the bitterness. It may cover up any weakness in Rajkot, but surely we do not want any weakness to be covered up. What lustre there is in the Rajkot State subjects themselves can be helpful. We can only encourage them, but the light can burn brighter only

on account of their own progress. Do go into this and if you agree with me, please stop these parties of Satyagrahis from elsewhere as well as of all students. There is so much else I could write, but where is the time for it? But that does not matter.

CLXIII

Segaon
(December 1938)

I read the papers through. It is a shocking state of things. If the Thakoresaheb remains firm a settlement can be reached at once. But I have my doubts about his firmness. How far can we make use of the information found in these papers? If you are invited you should certainly go. I feel that if you go there you should also see the Resident and speak to him frankly. The invitation from the Raja cannot be kept a secret. If the Raja does not have so much courage, it may perhaps not be worth while going to Rajkot.

CLXIV

Segaon
December 21, 1938

The Maulana refuses flatly [to accept Presidentship of the Congress]; it is not therefore advisable to press him further. I feel it would be better if we consider Pattabhi [Sitaramayya].

CLXV

Segaon
December 31, 1938

You already know Shambhushankar. He hopes to get *swaraj* in Palitana. Shambhushankar is a man of independent temperament. His ambition is that he will

attain his object entirely depending on God's grace. But he does expect to receive the blessings of his elders. I have already told him that my blessings would always be given if he could carry on his struggle with indomitable faith. All votaries of truth and non-violence carry such blessings in their own pockets in any case. But that is not enough to satisfy him and he wants your blessings too. Please listen to what he says and give him your best wishes.

CLXVI

A slip of written answers to questions on the Rajkot Satyagraha.

Tell Vallabhbhai that he should use the fewest possible words. His speeches should be as non-partisan as possible. People must be free not to go to prison if the situation is such that their presence is necessary outside. He should advise the Darbar and the Trust to arrive at a settlement through arbitration. He should explain to the people the importance of redeeming their pledge.

CLXVII

Bardoli
January 11, 1939

I have always thought — and at present I think so more than ever — that with the exception of one or two leaders of repute in each province all workers should observe silence and not make speeches. And if this is impossible, they should read out in meetings well thought out and simply written short lectures. Every one must bear it in mind that people are getting more and more power in their hands. In such a situation, not a single word should pass the lips of popular leaders except after due deliberation.

CLXVIII

Segaon
February 7, 1939

The conditions in Limbdi are horrible but that does not come as a surprise to us. We shall have to witness such and even worse events. Therein lies a test for the people. Our path is straight. I hope to write something about it. I do what I can taking sufficient care of my health; so I deliberately abstain from dealing with some matters. I very much like what Subhasbabu is doing at present. We are well saved.

I am ready whenever you call for a meeting. I enclose a letter from Mani.

I sat down to write this after finishing the weddings of two Ashram girls. These were solemnized with extreme simplicity. No one was invited from outside. There were Harijans and others from the village itself. I liked it very much.

CLXIX

Segaon
February 11, 1939

It is difficult to believe that Mani has been separated from Ba.

If the Working Committee is to meet here on the 22nd, how about Bardoli? Jamnalal writes that the meeting will be held here on the 22nd. What if you stay here for the present?

CLXX

Segaon
February 12, 1939

What happened about the articles Chudgar was going to write for me? I want them soon. There is a long letter from the Viceroy. I have sent a reply and will have a copy sent to you.

Please send me the Princes Protection Act with the attached notification.

I cannot quite understand how they took *Mani away from Ba and then brought her back.

CLXXI

Segaon
February 13, 1939

. . . It does not appear that the Garasiyas will easily let go the estates which they consider their property. If we go on suffering silently all will be well.

Ba's problem was solved quickly. Mani is clever and brave. She has learnt the art of adequately dealing with each situation as it arises. She is a jewel in fact as well as in name.

CLXXII

Wardha
September 22, 1939

Have a look at the telegram for Rajkot and dispatch it. I think you should stay here. That will lighten your burden, and we shall be able to meet daily and discuss things.

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* When Manibehn was separated from Ba, she went on a hunger-strike and took her food only when she was taken back to Ba.

CLXXIII

Nagpur
September 24, 1939

Do not tell Lilavati [Munshi] or Hansabehn [Mehta] just yet about going to Rajkot. I have written to Perin-behn [A. D. Naoroji] that she should go. I thought I ought to write to her. Wadia has not yet declined. I have written to Perin that she should hold herself in readiness to go if Wadia could not go. I shall write to you when she replies. I have asked for the reply to be sent to Simla by wire.

CLXXIV

Segaon
October 14, 1939

Please read the enclosed letter and reply to the writer after making inquiries. I have replied in brief that he should write to the Minister. But that is not enough. We should subject such things to closer scrutiny.

Kishorlal yesterday was telling me that you had said: "Bapu has placed us in Jawaharlal's charge; so we must go on doing as he says." I hope this was only a joke. I have not handed you over to any one. There was a lot of discussion yesterday and the day before among those who had stayed on here. It will not do if all of you do not exercise your independent judgment and shift the responsibility for not doing it on me.

CLXXV

Segaon
October 31, 1939

Why do you keep falling ill like this? You must maintain your health. Send news to me in Delhi by wire.

CLXXVI

Sevagram
Independence Day
[January 26, 1940]

What makes you say that you cannot even talk to me? The fact is that you do not feel the need of talking with me. That is your habit from the beginning.

It is desirable that you do not come to Delhi at present. I reach there on the fifth. If there is anything worth while I shall send you a wire and will also call others. That is how I feel, but if you have any special reasons, do come over to Delhi. Even if you do not come now, keep yourself in readiness to come.

Vira Vala is gone. Let us see who succeeds him. Things seem to be very peculiar in Mysore.

CLXXVII

On the way to Delhi
February 3, 1940

I have been through these figures. These thirty candidates are not to be selected by Prithvisinh but by all of you or by you singly. The expenditure per head is shown at Rs twenty; but will not there be anything on the credit side? If not, the expenditure will come to $915 \div 30 = 30\frac{1}{2}$ Rs per head. We must consider whether this is proper. What, do you think, would be the expenditure per head in a boarding house where no servants are kept? But the main point is not the cost; it is the selection of the candidates. When I ask you to make arrangements as desired by him, you should not take it to mean that you should not guide Prithvisinh at all. Guide him by all means where you feel like it. You will have to maintain general supervision. Pray for Delhi.

CLXXVIII

Sevagram
May 7, 1940

You know more about the subject on which the writer of this letter has written; so I am sending it to you. You know about my *exploit in Delhi. Now cables are being exchanged with London. I shall leave for Shantiniketan on the night of the 15th. Thence to Calcutta on the 19th.

CLXXIX

Sevagram
May 13, 1940

I have already written to you about this. I also wrote to him. I imagine you know that Nanabhai is in it. We shall have to send Rs 2,000 for the present. We will manage. I am writing to him in detail. You also please write.

CLXXX

Sevagram
May 30, 1940

I do not know if Mahadev has written to you about Suresh [Banerji]'s visit. He himself is now more inclined to this view. He wants to attract Subhas also but he is not likely to succeed. I wrote that he could come and see me whenever he wanted. He knows my position. The views expressed by him in public clearly indicate that he cannot come. He believes that those views are now changed. There seems to be little one could expect of him.

* Refers to his telling the Viceroy that Congress could accept nothing short of complete independence and would accord the Britain moral support within the limits imposed by non-violence.

CLXXXI

Sevagram
August 1, 1940

The enclosed letter is from Nadiad. Please see if anything should be done about it.

It is not right that you fall ill from time to time. You should take some rest.

Why do you feel uneasy? I would definitely regard whatever you decide as proper because in the final analysis a person can only act according to his own lights. Even if a mistake is being made, it can only be rectified after it is committed. I am having talks with Rajaji not to bring him round to an opposite point of view but about what should be done next. I do not want to try and change his views. The change will come only with experience. I have not the slightest doubt about mine* being the right view. Statesmanship also lies along my way. But enough of that for the present. Do come here when you like.

CLXXXII

Sevagram
September 22, 1940

We cannot now expect you to come here. Yesterday I did keep looking for your arrival. Now of course I will leave here on Wednesday.

The grocery merchants will give away 71 cows on my birthday. Samaldas asked for a message and I have

* Gandhiji believed that India could and should be defended against foreign invasion by non-violent means. The Sardar and other members of the Congress Working Committee thought otherwise.

sent *one. Please explain it to the donors. Do not agree to any conditions attached to the donation. I shall use it wherever I wish for cow protection. There is certainly nothing against accepting the cows, but I should be free to decide how they are to be distributed.

I hope you are free from fever.

CLXXXIII

Sevagram

Slip of replies written on the day of silence during the latter part of November 1940

Rajkumari is to remain outside prison even when I and all other members of the Ashram have courted imprisonment, and to look after minor matters. She has the capacity required for the purpose. She will remain in the Ashram. If the Government starts shooting, she should face it and die. I believe that she has courage. Even if she has not, there is nothing to lose.

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* The text of the message reads:

Sevagram
(via Wardha)

It should really not be necessary for me to send a message for a meeting over which the Sardar is to preside. However it has been asked for and I am sending one. I consider myself an excellent servant of the cow; so their donation will be put to the best possible use. But they should realize that unless they themselves habitually drink cow's milk and use cow's ghee, the seventy one cows now being given in charity will find no one ready to consume their milk and milk products.

CLXXXIV

Another slip written about the same time

Please tell Vallabhbhai that I am becoming more and more firm in my opposition to the Government. For the present only those I have chosen should go to prison. If they do not arrest me, I shall send all the rest, as many of them as the Government wants. If I am arrested, God will direct the movement.

CLXXXV

Sevagram
November 13, 1940

You must have got all the news from Mahadev. He is meeting every one at present and I do not think it will be right if any one starts going to prison while he is still on his exploratory tour. You may go after Mahadev has been there. If you wish to see me, do come here; otherwise I will definitely send Mahadev. If he goes there direct he will not be able to bring my final decision. Therefore please change the dates a little if necessary. They are making excellent preparations in Berar. There is a letter from [S. K.] Patil of Bombay and I am replying to him.

Mahadev will arrive on Friday night. It seems to be in order that Mangaldas* [Pakvasa] and *Dada [Mavlankar] should write to the Governor. There is no question of their resigning but their letters should include cogent arguments. I note that you expect me to send a draft. I cannot send it today, as there is more

* Speakers of the Bombay Council and Assembly respectively.

urgent work to be done. Will it do if I send it with Mahadev? I will send it today if possible. Those who are not in the priority list can also go to prison but I am inclined to send them in after you all have gone. However if you see the necessity of sending them after studying the local situation, do send them. I feel that Narahari should not be sent in just yet. If any one gets perturbed if he does not join, I should regard it as a sorry state of things.

Rafi [Ahmad Kidwai] was with me only for half an hour. He only wanted to know the trend of my thinking. Jawaharlal has told all of them that they should silently do as I say.

CLXXXVI

Sevagram
March 9, 1941

I intentionally do not write to you. Mahadev is in Delhi; so I cannot resist the temptation of writing after seeing Dahyabhai's handwriting. All is well. Some of the persons selected for individual civil disobedience are bound to disappoint. But their number is the smallest on this occasion. It will be a long drawn out struggle, but time is on our side and there is no question of losing the battle. I trust every one there spins with intelligent faith. In accordance with my nature, my faith in the charkha continues to grow deeper and deeper. Bharatanand[Maurice Frydman]'s little inventions make everything very cheap. I keep very good health.

[This and the following three letters were sent to Yeravda Central Prison, where the Sardar remained from November 17, 1940 to August 19, 1941.]

CLXXXVII

Sevagram
May 7, 1941

I was writing to Manibehn; so I wrote to you also. My work goes on without a hitch. The health remains excellent. The heat does not seem to cause any harm, as the head is protected by a moist cloth.

I now feel like undertaking a journey somewhere. I shall go where God leads me. Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bihar come to my mind. But I am still thinking about it. We must discover the path to peace or die. That is the only way I can go, but I cannot find it unless God leads me to it. Thus I am neither ruffled nor anxious. I try to remain watchful and devoted to my duty.

Do not read too much meaning in what I have written. I have put down everything I could think of.

CLXXXVIII

Sevagram
May 31, 1941

Manibehn arrived yesterday. She has become extremely thin. Even so I would have sent her back to prison but I think she will be able to do much good work in Ahmedabad. So I have asked her to go there. She will halt at Bombay for a couple of days and then go.

Mani says that there is unbearable inconvenience as regards the latrines in the women's ward in the prison. You must agitate about it there. It appears to be less a question of cost than of sheer indifference and laziness. I think you should be able to obtain redress by courteous intervention.

Do not worry about the riots. Let things take their own course. I have come to believe that actual war has broken out. We shall see where it takes us all. Nothing that any one would want can affect the result. I am sitting back quite unperturbed. I guide workers according to my capacity. If necessary, I shall go to Ahmedabad or Bombay or even elsewhere.

Only truth and non-violence shall prevail. We will soon find out whether we have truth and non-violence in us.

CLXXXIX

Sevagram
August 14, 1941

I was glad to receive your letter yesterday and sorry to read it. Mahadev had written about some deterioration in your health but your letter seems to suggest that it is worse. If that is so, what is the good of your being in Dr Gilder's company? If he cannot cure you, he will be sacked.

I would myself prefer your living exclusively on fruit juices. That would set right everything that is wrong with the intestines. You should be benefited by taking as much as you can of the juices of grapes, oranges, pomegranates and pine-apples. There should be no onset of weakness if you can take a sufficient quantity of juices, say, sixty ounces. At the same time you must keep a wet mud pack on the abdomen at night. It should never be allowed to happen that you are released because of illness. Do keep me properly informed, in at least post cards.

Workers in Gujarat are being well tested. They seem to be working well. Mahadev is also getting good

*experience. I manage to do without him. Kishorlal now lives here and assists me. My health is fairly good.

Ba has recovered her strength. She walks about three quarters of a mile in the evenings. She goes on working all day and can eat fairly well. There is no reason for anxiety.

Jamnalal is having a change of air in Simla. He is able to walk 8 miles a day and plays chess and other games. Janakibehn and Madalasa live with me. With the death of Gurudev [Ravindranath Tagore] the responsibility of collecting funds for the Dinabandhu Andrews memorial soon has devolved on me. His will be done. . . .

CXC

Sevagram
August 21, 1941

I was afraid that you would be released. What else could the Government do any way? Now you should return to work only after you have completely recovered. There is so much work to be done. I will not feel at ease until your operation is duly performed. Do arrange to keep me well informed. Did the jail authorities give you my letters?

[This and the following ten letters were sent to Bombay.]

CXCI

Sevagram
August 31, 1941

I have your letter but I will not expect letters from you for the present. If you obtain your discharge from

* Collecting funds for flood relief.

the doctors without giving offence and come here, I shall be delighted. I feel that the trouble in your intestines can be cured by earth and similar nature-cure treatment as well as by changes in the diet. I cannot put much faith in Ayurveda. Vaidyas do not acquire enough knowledge. Some drugs are effective but I have never found that they know how these act. These are merely my ideas. Do just what gives you satisfaction. You must get better by some means or other. I would certainly not let you spend one hour on the lavatory seat.

CXCII

Sevagram
September 14, 1941

I send a copy of the reply I gave to [Manu] Subedar. I think he will understand. You know we have to get our work out of persons of all sorts and kinds of capacity.

You should not have any worries at present. Your health must come back to normal. If you improve under homoeopathic treatment I may be able to have some faith in it. I have not had so far any confidence in it. I placed one case in the hands of some one who knew it but in vain. But this is by the way. I only wish that homoeopathy is successful in your case. I have heard much praise of it. [C. R.] Das believed in it; so also Motilalji and Gurudev [Tagore], and nearer home, our Lakshmidas believes in it. But in the end every one seems to end up with allopathy. All this I have written is no good but I let it pass. The cure is the thing.

Enclosure

Sevagram
September 14, 1941

Dear Subedar,

I have received your letter. I think that you have been misled again. Qaid-i-Azam has not stated even one thing definitely. He wants to prove the two-nation theory and wants partition. It is just as if one would refuse to listen to some one who wants to separate two brothers.

The accusations against the Congress have been proved false but if they are not, they can be placed before an arbitration bench.

One should regard good understanding as impossible as long as they persist in a policy of going ahead by obtaining maximum concessions from either the Government or the Congress. This way they will never feel that they have had enough.

I am strongly of opinion that the riots in Sindh, Dacca and Ahmedabad were meant only to bring pressure on the Congress. But I am prepared to give it up, so that all the matters in dispute could be put before the arbitrator. I do not think anything apart from this can be done.

You should also remember that all questions will, in the end, be solved by the people themselves and all of us will be left standing by. Therefore my advice to you is that you should either wash your hands of this matter or discuss it on the basis of some fundamental principles: even one will do.

CXCIII

Sevagram,
September 18, 1941

It would now be best if you finish with the homoeopathic course of treatment. If some time is lost, never mind. You must be patient until you are sure that you have benefited.

As you have taken Lilavati [Ashar] in hand, I do not worry about her at all. I hope Bhanumati is all right.

Has Bhulabhai been released now? He seems to have been much pulled down.

CXCIV

Sevagram
September 19, 1941

I talked at great length with Khan Bahadur Allahbux. He is now going to Karachi and will then see Maulana [Abul Kalam]. I am sure that the Congress should leave the Assembly. So should the Khan Bahadur. If he belongs to the Congress he should do that. If the Congress helps the war effort in Sindh and not elsewhere, it can be and is interpreted in a very unfavourable manner. It will not in any way benefit the nation, or Sindh, or Hindus or Musalmans. Who can benefit by a wrong step? I would have supported the quitting of the Assembly by the Congress even if there was no war. But that is not very material at present. I will discuss this further if you want. In this I have only showed you how my mind is working so that you might understand Khan Bahadur well. He tells me that he agrees with me.

CXCV

Sevagram
September 22, 1941

It seems you are not still on the road to recovery. I would like you to come here if nothing definite emerges during the next fortnight. If you are well enough to travel, it might perhaps be a good idea just to come and spend a few days here. Please do what suits you best. Rajendrababu is improving day by day. Now he comes to see me daily.

Prema Kantak must have met you. Her work is proceeding systematically.

What about Allahbux? I am certain that the Congress must get out. But Rajendrababu has some doubts about it.

CXCVI

Sevagram
September 25, 1941

Nanibehn Jhaveri passed away. It is not easy to understand how, but it is an act of God which we cannot understand.

I quite understand about Allahbux. I have already said that we will abide by whatever the Maulana suggests. I told him at the same time that if he had fully understood the propriety of giving up office he should explain it to Maulana and resign and go into the wilderness with the Congress. This would not involve any breach of promise or other faulty procedure. But enough of it at present. We can have some discussion on the merits when you are here. My opinion regarding Sindh

is not anything new. Only it has become firmer and applies to all the provinces. But I am not in a hurry about it. It can only be enforced when most of us including the Maulana agree on it.

There is no harm if you receive homoeopathic treatment for a limited period of time as required. I have heard the fame of the waters in Hajira. I do not know about Devlali but there is a fair chance of Hajira agreeing with your health. In the end we can always try naturopathy. But first of all we must meet if only for a short time. . . .

I think I shall have to go on tour for Dinabandhu Memorial fund. I wish to start in the middle of October.

CXCVII

Sevagram
September 26, 1941

You know what I think from yesterday's letter. It is not so hot here as you think. The nights are always lovely. There are mosquitoes in the bungalow, but if you sleep out in the open at Sevagram they will not trouble you. All other conveniences are also there; so it would be a good idea if you come over here for two or three days. I am not convinced about Devlali, but Hajira is quite famous.

Satyamurti writes that permission should be given for entering the Assembly. I do not like it at all. What do you think?

CXCVIII

Sevagram
October 2, 1941

You must now be getting ready to leave. Mathuradas is seriously ill. Could you please send somebody to

be near him? I have already written to Radha. I am thinking of asking Jamnalalji to go. I hope you are keeping well.

We have established a new Goseva Sangh. It is a fresh field of endeavour for Jamnalalji.

Jamnalal will start tomorrow. He will go to Mathuradas after a halt in Bombay. . . .

CXCIX

Sevagram
October 4, 1941

We are to meet shortly but I had better write about one thing. Manibehn writes that X will represent the millowners in a dispute against the labourers. This is incredible but Mani cannot be wrong. So I first thought of writing to X myself. But later on I gave up the idea; for if you are already on the spot, I shall not have to write, as you can iron out things yourself. If Mani's information is correct, please call X and tell him that if he wants to appear in court he should do so on behalf of labour and not for the millowners. Another thing is that as far as I know X does not propose to practise as a pleader. He has given himself wholly to national service and only accepts special cases occasionally. But if he starts practice like other lawyers, it would be very deplorable. I have a definite impression that he said he would never engage in legal practice and that he has left the Congress so that none need have any doubts as regards his position. Otherwise he still belongs to the Congress, and I imagine just like me he has become more of a Congressman after resigning. I have found him straightforward and wise as also capable of sacrifice and willing to correct himself. If your impression

is the same as mine, please call him and explain the position to him. Our behaviour towards him should be based on the assumption that he is Congress-minded.

You know Maulana wants Y to leave the legislature. I have not regarded it as necessary nor has Rajendrababu, the professor or yourself, I am told. Is that so? Is there any need to modify this?

CC

Sevagram
October 5, 1941

Come here after staying in Nasik if you like. All I want is that you should get well. . . .

CCI

Sevagram
October 8, 1941

Raja cannot come just yet. Two young, highly educated sons of his brother died recently, and there are two or three people ill in his house. So he will first go to Bangalore. He will stay there a few days and then come. He must have informed you about it. I too wish you do not have to come here twice. So you had better come when Raja and others are due. Satyamurti is definitely coming on the 10th and Kamaladevi [Chattopadhyaya] tomorrow. Prakasam is sure to come. Asaf Ali will meet Jawaharlal and the Maulana and then come. So it will be quite a good gathering of notables. I shall however manage to cope with it.

Your only duty consists in getting well.

There is quite a raid on the Ashram just now. Many requests are coming in. I usually say no to all of them

for there is no room for them. Houses are being built but the place still remains full.

[This and the following two letters were sent to Nasik.]

CCII

Sevagram
October 10, 1941

Please read the enclosed letter and give the necessary guidance.

Biyani has been here. There has been a reign of terror in Amravati.

CCIII

Sevagram
October 13, 1941

. . . I can quite understand about Dhirubhai [Bhulabhai Desai]. You should remain completely out of it. Nothing can be done, as the basis of the little authority I have is quite different.

CCIV

[Sent by hand]
The Ashram
Saturday

I hear that it is your birthday today. So another year has passed out of your years of service. To wish that you should pass many more years in the same manner is to wish you a long life. Do not forget that we are not to go until we have attained Swaraj.

CCV

Sevagram
December 5, 1941

I got your letter and the doctors' report. . . . No changes are to be made until I reach there. We shall then discuss it with Dr Gilder. I cannot give up my belief that the present diet is adequate and sure to be beneficial. However we do want to give due respect to the doctors' findings. Do not let anything come in the way of your getting rest. Walks must be taken both in the morning and the evening, and you must walk about or lie in bed but not sit up, as advised by the doctors.

[This and the following letter were sent to Bardoli.]

CCVI

Sevagram
December 5, 1941

Maulana's telephone just came through. He reached there at 11 a.m. from Calcutta. He was well except for some pain from sciatica. He wants to leave in a couple of days. He is going to have talks with Jawaharlalji and asks whether a Working Committee meeting should be held now and if so, where. He would like to have the meeting in Wardha if there is any change in the programme for Bardoli.

Bapu is going to send a telephone message to say that the meeting should be called as soon as possible but that he does not want any change to be made about the Bardoli programme, and that Bardoli would also be better in view of your health and facilities. This is

what he is going to say but if the Maulana insists on Wardha, he may have to agree.

Perhaps you also will get his phone message.

[Written by Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala on Gandhiji's behalf]

CCVII

Swaraj Ashram
Bardoli
January 4, 1942

Never mind if you cannot attend the meeting, but you must have the hip bath!

CCVIII

Sevagram,
February 7, 1942

I was thinking of writing to you for some time and here is your own letter today. You should try and get raw vegetables somehow. I have greatly benefited by their use. So I have also brought Ghanshyamdas to 4 ounces of butter daily on the basis of this treatment and he feels much more energetic and brighter. If you keep the green leaves in water with some salt in it they will become as good as fresh, while onions, carrots, knolkols and radish can keep for four or five days. Of *bhaji* leaves 4 or 5 are enough. In any case, we do not want to take more than two ounces in all.

Send Z here. I shall train him and let him go. He can then avail himself of your help. He is a good fellow but still rather immature. He will make progress here. You can send for him when you need him again.

Rest assured that the trouble in your intestines is bound to be cured by suitable changes in your diet. You should never strain yourself in the lavatory.

I can see the point of your insisting upon having Mahadev there for a change of air. But he cannot properly edit *Harijan* from there. There is always the desire on his part to show me what he has written and on my part to have a look at it. In this way slight but essential alterations have to be made on many occasions. I have asked Narahari to come over there.

Ghanshyamdas lives in the room you were in. I could not treat him if he stayed in Wardha.

Ba does not feel too well. You are to come here after finishing with Hajira; and you should leave this place only on business. You must have read my suggestion about spinning in Gujarat. Please see that the plan is implemented. Also please collect funds for the Charkha Sangh.

[This and the following three letters were sent to Hajira, near Surat.]

CCIX

Sevagram
February 23, 1942

Mahadev has been struck down badly. He started to go to Nasik with Ghanshyamdas yesterday but felt giddy on the way to the station. So he decided very wisely not to go and saw the Civil Surgeon. He took some treatment there and returned home. He is well at present. The blood pressure has come down but he seems to have passed through a severe crisis. It shows that he is in need of long rest. Do not get anxious. His trouble seems to be similar to Narahari's. He is sure to get well.

How do you do?

CCX

Sevagram
February 25, 1942

It remains for me to reply to your letter to Mahadev. He is out of danger, but he is not to do any work for some time.

As regards Chiang Kai Shek, you will read about him in *Harijan*. He came and went without creating any impression, but fun was had by all. I would not say that I learned anything, and there was nothing we could teach him. All that he had to say was this : "Be it as it may, help the British. They are better than the others and they will now become still better."

We had a meeting of [the late Jamnalalji's] friends. It would certainly have been better if you had come. Every one met in complete cordiality. There was much discussion about Jamnalalji's work. Some of the lines of action were drawn up. Ghanshyamdas took a prominent part in it. Janakibehn became the president of Goseva Sangh.

I would prefer to let you have bread in your diet only after you come under my personal care. Take pawpaw; increase the number of dates. It is rather risky to take bananas but you could try and eat them very ripe, well mashed. There should be no difficulty about increasing the calories. Now is not this a generous allowance?

I do not like Indulal [Yajnik]'s letter at all. Could you not write to him something like this : "You have been so unstable that it is difficult to say when one could

rely upon you. Therefore it would be best if you worked separately both from the Congress and myself. If your work is complementary to that of the Congress, there will be no conflict. You should not feel hurt by this frank letter."

Raja left yesterday. Rajendrababu went today. He will go to Patna after seeing the Maulana in Calcutta. I had a talk with him about Hindustani Sangh. You should try to learn Urdu.

CCXI

Sevagram
March 1, 1942

I replied to your letter about your diet as soon as it was received. You can make up the calories with *gud*, glucose, raisins and dates; that is easily done.

Don't worry about Mahadev. He rests, as he should. He can eat well. Ba also is well. . . . Thus the house is full as before. But you must rest assured that there is always room for you whenever you come. And a bath to boot. Will the Working Committee meet here?

CCXII

Sevagram
March 7, 1942

If you cannot summon enough courage to live in Sevagram during summer, I shall try and come where you will stay. I believe it is possible for you to become one hundred per cent fit. In the meantime wherever you go, please try to have fixed hours for rest, bath and meals. If the Viceroy keeps them, why not we?

[This was sent to Nadiad.]

CCXIII

Sevagram
March 22, 1942

The enclosure is for your information. I have not replied to it.

I hope you have got your teeth attended to. I am anxious to know about the man who teaches you *asanas* [yogic exercises]. Acharya [Narendradeva] continues to improve. . . . It is getting hotter here.

[This and the following four letters were sent to Bombay.]

CCXIV

Sevagram
April 13, 1942

I heard from you after a long time. I kept writing and dictating but you just stayed on and on in the capital.

I am not surprised that the intestines are still giving trouble, for they need a long rest.

Jawaharlal seems to have bid farewell to non-violence. But you should go on with your own work. Try and restrain the people as best you can. His speech* today seems dangerous. I am thinking of writing to him.

CCXV

Sevagram
April 14, 1942

Once again there is no letter from you. The professor told me the whole story. Do not go to Allahabad if your health does not permit. But you must let them know what

* In which he endorsed the scorched-earth policy.

your ideas are. I feel that you should go out of the Congress if the Congress adopts a policy of violence. This is not an occasion when one could sit back without expressing one's views. In many matters the wrong sort of action is being taken. I think we cannot go on just watching it but must speak out even at the cost of popularity.

I want you to read carefully what I have been writing in *Harijan*.

In Orissa, it appears that the Communists are making preparations for guerilla warfare and on the other hand the Forward Bloc people seem to be preparing to help the Japanese. Both are vague rumours but quite within the range of possibility. An attack on Orissa seems very likely and the Government have massed their troops there.

What about your health? What has that *sadhu* to say?

They are considering [L.M.] Patil for working in the Udyog Sangh. Is it necessary to pay him a salary? If yes, how much? He is to take up the responsibility for Maharashtra.

CCXVI

Sevagram
April 22, 1942

I have received your letter. From the Maulana's telegram it appears as if you will have to go. You should take a firm line. If an unequivocal resolution about non-violent non-cooperation is not accepted it would be your duty to leave. There should also be strong opposition to the proposals about scorched-earth policy and the use of foreign troops. They are pressing me to

attend the meeting but I wrote I was not going. I have arranged three or four meetings here during the same period. The major meeting was fixed much earlier and cannot now be postponed.

When you return from Allahabad, do stop over here, if only for a day or two. The weather here is a hundred times better than in Allahabad. Bring Rajendrababu as well as Deo with you.

CCXVII

Sevagram
May 23, 1942

As Prithvisinh has now lost his faith in me, my relations with him are ended. Gopalrao will resign from his organisation and I think Kishorlal and Nathji will also end their connection with it. What happens to Prithvisinh we shall only know later.

I have suggested to Prithvisinh that he should make a public statement about his loss of faith. But if he does not I shall have to say something. You can tell our own people about this breach.

I suppose I must not say anything about Limbdi for the present.

CCXVIII

Sevagram
May 27, 1942

I had cordial talks with Jawaharlal all day long. We came to understand each other better. Choithram casts the responsibility for Sindh entirely on you. You must be firm. If you agree with me, you must write to him. I asked Jawaharlal about it. He says that the Congress members must go out, as also Allahbux. That

is the position. However, if your own opinion is different, I have nothing to say.

It is surprising that there is no improvement in your health. This cold must go. Do you clean the nose by taking in water with salt and soda bi-carb? If you are not still better, you must come and stay here.

[This was sent to Bardoli.]

CCXIX

Sevagram
June 3, 1942

I have had full discussions with Dhebarbhai. I feel that Limbdi State never intended to settle the dispute though Bhagavandas thought it did. When those who had left the State returned, they found that there were no signs of a settlement having been effected. Therefore your statement must be corrected in this respect.

However I think something is yet to be done before your statement is issued. Dhebarbhai's impression is that Fatehsinhji wishes to see you. If that is so and if he wants to end the dispute, you must be ready to meet him. We shall think about your statement after this stage has passed.

The situation at present is quite good. The malcontents are out. Let them be where they are. A boycott has been called against the local cotton and that must continue. Therefore you need not issue your statement just yet. If you think I should say something, let me know by telegram and I will do it. There will still be time for next week's *Harijan*.

Be careful about one thing as regards your health. You should be in the lavatory only the shortest time

possible and you must not exert any strain. Take this as an inviolable rule.

[This and the following six letters were sent to Bombay.]

CCXX

Sevagram
June 10, 1942

I do not think there is anything to be gained by seeing the Limbdi prince. There is no sense in his wanting to see you as an old friend but not as a Congressman, nor as a representative of the People's Association.

You should issue no statement. We should not get involved in the argument whether or not an agreement was made. Those who can stand on their own legs should carry on the struggle. If the princes think of trading among themselves let them. But the Boycott Committee must continue to function and maintain the boycott. Even if one man stands his ground he will be a representative of the popular struggle; and one can say that the struggle is still on, even if its market value is not even a copper.

I am going to Wardha to see Maulana Saheb. He has definitely grown weak. I hope you are well.

CCXXI

Sevagram
June 14, 1942

Mahadev will write to you about the talks we are having here.

Somebody must go to Jodhpur. I shall see if I can induce Sriprakasa to go. If he does not go, Munshi should provided that he can stand the Jodhpur climate. Discuss this with Jawaharlal.

My purpose in writing this is different. Dacoities are on the increase in Gujarat. We must find out some method of dealing with them. I would not mind if the peasants met the challenge by means of *lathis*. But meet it they must. Do think over it.

CCXXII

Panchgani
June 15, 1945

Slip written during silence when the Sardar met Gandhiji soon after release from Yeravda prison

I have thought it out about your diet. I think that any food with fibres in it should not be taken. Therefore you should take such vegetables as the marrow in which the residuary part would be small. The main items should be milk, glucose, honey, and if you can digest it, butter. I feel that even vegetables with seeds in them should be given up, as for example brinjals and tomatoes. The millet yeast which was sent to me from Coimbatore may perhaps be good for you. The idea is that only such food should be eaten as is not likely to prove a strain on the intestines; and a small quantity of it each time although this means eating four times a day. The hip bath should be taken both in cold and hot water. Lying in a full-length tub is likely to do you good. This does not mean that doctors may not examine you or make suggestions. They may, but they do not make a study of dietetics.

CCXXIII

Sevagram
July 22, 1945

Sushila [Nayyar] is leaving today. Undergo the operation only if it is required. If the observation is to

last for two to three months I suggest you stay with Dinshah [Mehta]. If you go there I will keep you company.

CCXXIV

Sevagram
July 25, 1945

If you decide to take treatment now, I would strongly recommend you to live with Dinshah in Poona and get treated. When I am ready to come there, I can also try my hand at it. In any case you will not be worse off, and Dinshah might possibly succeed in curing you.

I talked to Pardiwala [about I. N. A. court-martial] and I shall be writing the letter today. . . . Such things are bound to happen but you are not the sort to get flustered.

CCXXV

Sevagram
July 29, 1945

. . . If you must go to Ahmedabad, you should stay there only a few days, previously fixed.

CCXXVI

Sevagram
August 3, 1945

I had intended to leave here on the 8th and to take you with me to Poona on the 10th. But I now find that I am tied up with meetings until the 19th, so the earliest I can start is on the 19th. I do not like it as I wanted to get away as soon as you were free. Now you will have to carry on for ten days more. You may stay a little longer in Ahmedabad if you wish. The best thing would be for you to come and stay in the Ashram for the

intervening period, and then we could go to Poona together. . . .

As for the Mahadev memorial, it would not be proper for me to issue a public appeal for funds. I might write to a few persons. It does not matter if Bombay does nothing about it. Do go over the plan I have suggested. More about it later or when we meet.

[This was sent to Ahmedabad.]

CCXXVII

Sevagram
August 9, 1945

It is a pity that you cannot get sleep in a train journey. We shall go to Poona as arranged. We shall see how its climate agrees with you. I will start on the 19th and arrive there on the 20th. I will stop for the day and we can leave for Poona by the first train on the 21st, hoping that we shall get good accommodation in the third class as before. In the meantime try and see if you can get some rest. If you take rest, Mani also will get some. I see that she cannot keep it up much longer. Even now she is sustained by her boundless devotion. But even devotion becomes helpless before nature.

[This and the following two letters were sent to Bombay.]

CCXXVIII

Sevagram
August 12, 1945

Your letter. God willing, we shall meet in Poona and have further talks.

I have also written to Maulana Saheb but not in your style. It is a difficult task. There are no two opinions

that he should consult all of you before taking an important step.

What I wrote to Jinnah Saheb was of course final. I could not have done anything else. But you and all others have the right to disagree with me. And if you cannot accept it with all your heart, you must say so from the housetops. I have not spoken on behalf of any one else. I have only expressed my own opinion. If I see any flaw in it, I will immediately admit it. You know very well that he does not like my proposal at all. Therefore do not worry about it.

There must be a new election, but is it certain that there will be one? If there is we shall think about it. More when we meet in Poona.

I can quite see you cannot come here. Railway journeys are no longer meant for you. Would it be less troublesome for you to fly from Bombay to Poona?

Every one liked your latest *speech. I find it rather hot but that does not matter. You cannot contain all that you feel within yourself.

I do hope Mani does not fall ill by attempting too much.

CCXXIX

Slip [1945]

You must flatly refuse to give any secret help. It would be highly improper. It can never remain secret. No one would or should accept such help openly. All this is worth considering carefully. Such important work cannot be done in haste or by bribery. Never mind if we do not succeed. Let the British give Pakistan to them.

* Delivered in Bombay after release from Ahmadnagar Fort.

CCXXX

Main Camp Sodepur
Camp Kontai
January 1, 1946

I got both your telegram and letter. Everything must be regular and in perfect order where the organisation is in the hands of Satishbabu and Hemaprabhadevi. So I get the mail regularly from Sodepur wherever I am. Satishbabu like you has accompanied me here [in Kontai] in the capacity of watchman cum bodyguard. Everything has been so regulated even in this new place that I can enjoy maximum leisure. So why should my health suffer?

I continue to witness the magical effect of prayer. The number of the congregation runs into thousands, and sometimes a hundred thousand; yet prayers are offered in pin-drop silence. There is no noise, no jostling. This is indeed a new experience.

I went through what you wrote about *Rajaji. . . . It would be a fine thing if the dispute has been finally settled. But I still have my doubts, as I get letters suggesting continuing disagreement. I reply to them only if absolutely necessary.

What am I to write about your health? I really like what Dinshah has suggested. But if you continue using up daily whatever strength you gain and regard the process as national service, what can be done?

The Agakhan telegraphed, "We shall meet" [as regards the proposal to acquire the land on which Ba

* About the constitution of the Madras Provincial Election Board.

and Mahadev Desai's *samadhis* were built]. Your reply about Jinnahbhai was quite good. I am not attracted by the Aga Khan's proposals. I am definitely against such partition. More about it when we meet.

I return to Sodepur on the 3rd and start for Assam on the 9th. Probably back to Sodepur on the 18th. Thence to Madras on the 23rd. I have allowed a maximum of two weeks in Madras. After spending some time in Sevagram, I shall go to Poona if you let me. If you do not, to Bardoli and then to Poona.

Bhai Vaikunth writes that Balasaheb [Kher], you and also Deo are dragging him into the Assembly. Do make him a member. As for the rest it may wait till I come.

[This was sent to New Delhi.]

CCXXXI

On the steamer
en route to Sodepur
January 3, 1946

I have telegraphed as follows:

> Leaving Bengal 20th and Madras about February 8. Very anxious go Poona before Bardoli. Will middle March be suitable Bardoli?

I am not going beyond the programme I had drawn up for Bengal. I think much work has been done there. The result is in the hands of God. I shall reach Sodepur this evening. This letter will be posted from there tomorrow morning. I am to go to Assam on the 8th after four days in Sodepur. The Assam tour, including travelling, should take eight days. Then to Sodepur and thence to Madras on the 23rd.

I suppose I shall meet the M.P.'s from Britain in Bombay, Poona or Wardha. It would be unseemly to speak disparagingly of them. There is no harm whatever if we use kind words. Then again there are some good men among them. I do not see much point in condemning them in advance.

You will have received my earlier letter. I must be in Poona for a few days after I take charge of Dr Dinshah's Nature Cure Clinic. I have therefore suggested the middle of March for my Bardoli visit. But I shall be guided by your wishes in the matter. I presume that you will definitely not keep me in Bardoli for more than 15 days. You may even release me from the promise to go there. There is also the possibility that you will be engrossed in the Congress affairs. I take it that you will call me to Bardoli only if my presence there is necessary. This is just to let you know how my mind is working. The final decision must be yours, for you are after all the Sardar and that too of Bardoli and as it happens, of India.

[This and the following twenty-two letters were sent to Bombay.]

CCXXXII

Sodepur
January 8, 1946

Yesterday I sent you a telegram as follows :

God willing reach Bardoli third March.

I really wanted to come on the first, but February has only 28 days in it and I do want to look in at Poona before going to Bardoli. . . .

I have already written about the British parliamentary delegation. We should not spurn it but on the other hand welcome it wholeheartedly. Not that people should be beside themselves with joy, as it used to happen when such people came in the past. But we should not insult our guests in any manner whatsoever. Congressmen need not decline invitations to parties that may be held to receive members of the delegation. I will certainly meet them somewhere. I was to see the Governor on returning from Midnapur. I saw him only last night and he himself asked me when I would be able to meet them. I gave him my dates. They will most probably meet me in Madras; no other dates seem to suit.

Dr Mahmud has come to see me and he will leave for Patna today after seeing me off on my way to Assam. During his stay here, the Governor heard about his arrival and suggested a meeting. They talked for about an hour. Nothing important seems to have been discussed, but they were glad to have met. . . .

I am quite well. Kanchan's health has taken a turn for the worse but I hope she will survive. I leave for Assam today. I do not like to leave her but you know how often I have had to go like this. Very probably Dr Sushila will stay on to be with her.

I have dictated this early in the morning before prayers. . . . If I were to fill this letter with an account of my experiences here, it could be made much longer. But I have not the time for it, and why should you want to read all that?

Rajkumari is here and will go to Assam with me.

CCXXXIII

Gramseva Ashram
Sevagram
February 8, 1946

You may not know X but he is a staunch Congressman. He has also suffered as such. I send you the letter which he left with me. On reading it you will see that Y has broken faith with the Congress. It was left with me in order to prevent his candidature being approved in error. Now do what seems right to you in the matter.

The tour was quite strenuous, but God was gracious so that it was finished without a hitch. As arranged, I hope to reach Bardoli on the 3rd. I leave here on the 17th, and reach Poona on the 19th.

From the newspaper reports you seem to have done fairly well in the Sindh elections.

CCXXXIV

Sevagram
February 10, 1946

Rajendrababu is with me. I have your telegram. I just cannot reach Bardoli before the 3rd.

The Viceroy has called me. But I cannot go in the near future.

CCXXXV

Sevagram
February 13, 1946

You will have seen my statement in the newspapers. I did not like what Jawaharlal is reported to have said. I have written to him also about it. We cannot incite

people in that way. We cannot take away what little they have from millions of poor people. If food is definitely available in a limited stock, it should be made to last out until the next season. I hold that we should offer our co-operation to this end. However I am reaching there on Monday, when I shall be in silence.

CCXXXVI

Sevagram
February 14, 1946

I think you are mistaken about the food situation. Some foodgrains may be brought from abroad but we can never count upon it. If the people show some enterprise, they can certainly grow more food. It may be that there would be insufficient cotton for the mills; if so the balance may be imported. There is enough of it for the spinning wheels.

CCXXXVII

Sevagram
February 16, 1946

You cannot detain me there until April 3. I have already written to you that you should have me over for 15 days at the utmost. I have also consented to engagements outside Bardoli after the 19th. You can take all the work you want from me during my fifteen days in Bardoli. I have had good talks with Bhai [B. G.] Kher. Of that more when we meet. I am quite busy at present.

I am sorry to hear about Bhulabhai's illness. I would like to go and see him before you take me home from the station. My silence will not come in the way. I hope Mathuradas though unwell will be able to come and see me at Birla Bhavan.

CCXXXVIII

Sevagram
February 23, 1946

I can understand the ordeal you are going through. To what a pass things have come?

Do you want to take me to Bardoli in this *situation? In any case I cannot stay there any longer than 15 days. Why should I be taken in a special train? Is it in order to save me from the crowds, that the night will have to be spent in the train? I send this with Sushila in the hope that it will reach you earlier. She will be able to give you the details.

CCXXXIX

Poona
February 24, 1946

Write and ask Awari to give up the fast and to send whatever case he wants to make to the Working Committee or to the All India Congress Committee. And of course to the public. You will have received the earlier letter sent with Sushila. I feel you should now give up the idea of taking me to Bardoli. I will of course do as you say but you must not leave Bombay. If there is anything about which you want to see me do come here. I shall come if you want me there: for my work here will be finished in a few days.

The differences of opinion existing in the Working Committee are very harmful at present. Frankness is essential. Please do not drive yourself too hard.

* When there were serious riots in Bombay in connection with the naval mutiny.

CCXL

Poona
February 26, 1946

Your letter. What are you going to do about Rajaji? He wants to leave; so let him go.

If you do want to take me to Bardoli I am ready. I only suggested that in a difficult situation like this your place was in Bombay. But you as the man on the spot know best. In making the suggestion I did not have my convenience in view but only what the state of the nation demanded of us.

You will see what I have again said about Aruna [Asaf Ali].

CCXLI

Poona,
March 19, 1946

I did receive your message to the navy. I also got the same information from the Associated Press. I paid no attention to it. I did not think it worth attending to either. I feel that we should chart our course in faith and wait and see whatever is to happen. Why should one who is already armed worry, particularly when the weapon in his hands is Ramabana [the arrow of Rama, i. e. trust in God]? These lines of Pritam constantly reverberate in my ears : 'मांहे पड्या ते महासुख माणे, देखनारा दाझे जो *ने।'

* 'Those who are in the fire feel the highest happiness while the onlookers who remain outside are scorched by it.'

I hope you will arrange for me to stay in the *bhangi* [sweepers'] colony.

For the nature cure clinic I must select some village for which I am looking around here. My plan is that the period from February to the end of July should be spent in a comparatively cool place, including April and May in the hills. This arrangement cannot be made in Gujarat. Abu is the only hill station and it does not have a climate comparable to that of Panchgani or Mahabaleshvar. Nor have I found a cool climate like that of Poona anywhere in Gujarat. I am telling you all this in order that you should have nothing to complain about later. However, do you think one could find a place in Gujarat where nature cure work could be done and the above conditions be satisfied? And would you really prefer it? Nature cure is no longer a hobby with me. I must try it out in detail.

CCXLII

Poona
March 21, 1946

I am leaving for Uruli tomorrow. I shall arrange to have a telephone there. Telegrams can of course be received there. Success or failure rests with God.

What I got from the Professor (Kripalani) about Khan Saheb etc. was quite the reverse. These people's reply must be that they would do as the Congress decided. But will you tell this to them or ask the Maulana to do it?

I see what you mean about Gujarat. I do not want to go anywhere merely for a holiday.

I quite understand the difficulties about putting me up at the *bhangi* colony but do overcome them.

There should be no haste about the restitution of Darbar Gopaldas' estate.

The future of Dinshah's clinic is under consideration. The South Africa meeting is still not certain.

CCXLIII

Uruli-kanchan
March 22, 1946

A letter from the Viceroy asking me to see him on the third was received this afternoon. I have not yet replied but I shall have to go.

The meeting about the Indians in South Africa is to be held on the 31st evening. It will be convened by the Imperial Citizenship Association and I am to be the president. You will of course hear more about it there.

It seems that a fair beginning has been made here; the end we shall know later on. I do not think your pessimism is justified.

CCXLIV

Uruli-kanchan
March 25, 1946

The Muslim League works in a peculiar manner. You can never have two meetings. Let the League arrange one. There is no harm if they get the credit for it. Purushottamdas will show you the letter I wrote to him. If the meeting called by the League is to be held on Sunday and if you think it would be inadvisable for me to come there on the same day, please send a telegram.

Telegrams are received here. We can even get a telephone connection if we want, but why go in for all that trouble for only six days more?

My business in naturopathy is flourishing. It is such that losses are out of the question. And it helps to advance my other work. If I find I have some capital with me and do not use it, what a big fool should I be? One must hope to live and work for 125 years. For the rest, God alone is the master of life as well as death.

I feel it is my duty to live in the *bhangi* colony. We must get over the difficulties.

CCXLV

Slip

This* will not suit you. There is no question of making a show, but do come if you feel like coming.

CCXLVI

Poona
July 1, 1946

I am head over ears in work. I started silence at nine o'clock yesterday. I met the Ministers.

Jawaharlal is coming here on the 4th and still insists that I should go to the Congress Working Committee meeting. If I have to come, I must be put up in the *bhangi* colony. It would be better if I could stay in the place where I was taken earlier. There would be natural hesitation in getting the same house, for the people staying in it must not be inconvenienced. Please do as you think fit after considering all this, and only if you find that I shall have to come.

I did not like what you told me the other day. I asked Pyarelal and asked him to write out what he thought and send it to you. He did not interpret anything that I said in the same way as you understood it. He only described what he saw himself. But what I said

* Attending a Quaker meeting to which the Sardar was invited.

was more serious and still is. It is nobody's fault. The fault lies with the circumstances. What can you or I do about it? You go by your own experience and I by mine. You know I have been at a loss to understand some of the things you have done, as for instance the expenditure incurred in the elections. I thought this old matter went much farther this time. I did not also like what you did about the I. N. A. Then again I do not like the way you lose your temper in the Working Committee. On top of it came the question of the Constituent Assembly. This is not by way of complaint but I see that we are drifting in different directions. There can be no unhappiness about it either and certainly no complaint. But we must realize the actual state of things.

[The Sardar's reply to the above:

You alone can decide about coming to Bombay. I feel that you should come because Jawaharlal has called you. Newspapers are already indulging in speculations about your non-attendance but that cannot be helped.

I saw the letter Pyarelal has written. You have also written; what shall I say about it? May be I am at fault. Only I cannot yet see it and that makes me unhappy.

I do not want to take a path different from yours. In the elections you thought I should abstain. But the Maulana and the Working Committee wanted me. I did the work, as I felt that if it had not been done Congress would have been held to be at fault at the time.

I took part in the I. N. A. Committee at the insistence of Jawaharlal and that too only in the relief work. There was nothing about it of politics.

If I did speak with some heat in the Committee, it was due to a defect in my temperament. This does happen occasionally with Jawaharlal. But there is nothing else behind my strong words.

My health goes on deteriorating and it seems that nothing can be done about it. On this occasion I found the atmosphere in Delhi full of mistrust and suspicion. There was extreme heat and our organisation lacked harmony. As to the future, it will be as it is shaped by God. I am making arrangements for your residence.]

CCXLVII

Panchgani
July 17, 1946

I went through the speech of the Maharaja of Kashmir. I did not like it. Nevertheless I am certain that Jawaharlal should not be hasty about this. He is not to go when the Maharaja pleases. It is for us to consider. The Working Committee must meet and discuss it. He is to go when the Committee recommends. It may also be that the case of Kashmir may be used in order to ruin everything else. I feel that no such opportunity should be given. My hope will be that whatever is done should be done after the Constituent Assembly meets. I would even go so far as to say that the Maulana or yourself should go there first and find out what is feasible. It may also be necessary for the Maulana to issue a statement addressed to the people of Kashmir. We should take all possible steps on our part, and if everything is to collapse in spite of ourselves, let it. It is a matter requiring patient deliberation. Munshi will tell you about other details.

Please also see the letter I wrote to Jawaharlal.

CCXLVIII

Panchgani
July 21, 1946

It is 4 a.m. and I am writing this by the light of a lantern. All the rest are asleep and will wake up when the electricity comes on at five. So I have only this piece of paper to write to you.

I received all your letters. It was a good thing that you did meet [Dr] Bhimrao [Ambedkar]. He will not agree to anything you propose. Why should a Harijan candidate obtain at least 20 per cent of Harijan votes to be validly elected? I see snags in this requirement. Do think about it. The sum of money to be spent for the Harijan candidates should be fixed. One can see that Harijans must have a certain number of seats in all elections.

I think that the Maharaja's letter about Kashmir is fairly good. I have already given you the details of the advice given by me and I enclose copies herewith.

I have said that I would see Bhimrao if he came to Poona or Sevagram. The newspaper report is incorrect.

Quite a number of things seem to be slipping out of the hands of the Congress. The Bombay postmen on strike do not listen to it, nor the Ahmedabad Hindus and Muslims indulging in riots, nor Harijans nor Muslims; it is a strange position indeed.

Are you not well enough to go to Ahmedabad? You are spoiling your health yourself. How nice would it have been if you had come here?

CCXLIX

Panchgani
July 23, 1946

It will be advisable for you to issue a statement on Goa and say that people belonging to a large number of parties come seeking your guidance. It is risky for them to have such a large number of parties. They must all come together and speak with one voice; and they should not build their hopes on people outside Goa. Too many statements would only create confusion. Therefore all the material should be sent to the Bombay Congress Committee which could then issue an official statement. As you understand it, the present struggle in Goa is only for civil liberty and it must be successful. The whole of India may show its sympathy with it, but the tribulations must be borne by the Indians in Goa. Goa's freedom must follow India's independence for which Goans perhaps may not be called upon to do anything much just now.

I see your point as regards Bhimrao. But do meet him again. His speeches are in bad taste. It would be a good idea to give a reply to the two points he has made. I do not have statistics about the elections as well as caste Hindus. I am getting them.

I do not agree at all about your health. You must do something about it. It is a pity you have no confidence at all in Dinshah, but there are many others who could be consulted. In any case you must not allow your health to get worse.

I quite see about Ahmedabad. There is no question of going when the people themselves do not want it.

CCL

Panchgani
July 24, 1946

I wrote to Abid Ali [who was reported to have fomented strikes] as soon as I received your letter. No one can sit in Congress House against our wishes and begin to fast.

I quite understand about Jawaharlal. Everything should be carried out smoothly for the present. We shall deal with future difficulties as they arise. Pyarelal says that there is a newspaper report about the meeting of the Working Committee in Wardha on the 8th.

There is another strike on top of the postal strike. This seems to me ominously significant. It is something that should make you and the others furiously to think. The Congress may wear a bold look but it seems to have lost its hold on the people. Or else Congress itself is involved in the troubles if from a distance. This must be clarified; otherwise the game which we are on the point of winning will be lost.

I hope you are well. It rains here for all the twenty four hours these days.

CCLI

Panchgani
July 27, 1946

If Jinnah Saheb's man is to go as well as Sudhir [Ghose], let him. If at all possible I would like it if Sudhir came and saw you and me before he left. It is certainly necessary to keep an eye on everything that is happening,

but it is no use worrying about it. I have not yet received Sudhir's letter; if I had, I would have given it to you at once.

I have already written a letter to Abid Ali which he must have received the night before or yesterday morning. I feel that if Abid Ali does not leave Congress House, Congress officials should start Satyagraha against him. Thus they can give him notice and then vacate and lock up all the rooms in Congress House until he goes. If such Satyagraha is not possible, they should ask him to leave after having given a notice as regards his trespass.

I leave Poona on the 5th or the 6th and go to Wardha direct *via* Kalyan. Thus there is no need to go as far as Bombay, particularly when it means living under police guard and putting the host and others to inconvenience. Don't you agree this is the right thing to do?

My dear Mani,

Why have you stopped writing to me?

Bapu

CCLII

Poona,
July 29, 1946

I have your letter. Deo also told me about it. I met the Indian princes in Maharashtra. A summary of the talks is being written. I shall send you a copy when it is ready.

There is a long letter from Abid Ali. I am replying today, suggesting that he should give up the fast, leave Congress House and if he wants, place his dispute with the millowners before arbitrators. Let us see what happens.

The postal strike seems to have got worse. You must issue a statement that the postmen refuse to accept Congress advice.

You must really do something about your health.

CCLIII

Poona
July 31, 1946

It is not right for you not to be careful about your health.

Bhai Abid Ali writes to say that he has broken his fast and has left Congress House. He has written in sweet reasonableness.

I have to go and see the Governor today. I understand it to be purely a courtesy call.

CCLIV

Poona
August 1, 1946

I have not yet been able to answer your letter fully. The main thing is about Ambedkar. I see risk in coming to any sort of understanding with him; for he has told me in so many words that for him there is no distinction between truth and untruth or between violence and non-violence. He acts up to a single principle, viz. to adopt any method which will serve his purpose. One has to be very very careful indeed when dealing with a man who would become a Christian, Muslim or Sikh and then be reconverted, being guided by whim pure and simple. There is so much more I could write in the same strain. To my mind it is all a snare and a delusion. Further

it is not necessary for him at present to insist upon each Harijan candidate securing at least 20 per cent of the Harijan vote. If India comes into its own at the centre, as it has in the provinces to some extent and if the caste Hindus are true to themselves, all will be well. But if the number of fair-minded persons is small and if power passes into the hands of fanatics, there is bound to be injustice, no matter what agreements you make today. You may now make any arrangements you like, but the men who beat up Harijans, murder them, prevent them from using public wells, drive them out of schools and refuse them entry into their homes — are not they Congressmen? It is essential to realize this present state of things. Therefore I will say that agreements such as you suggest are not so important as the capacity of the Congress to do justice. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness : even then I prefer it that way. Therefore if we negotiate with Ambedkar out of the fear of the League, we are likely to lose on both the fronts.

I definitely start from here on the 5th, reaching Wardha the following day. I have already written to you about my decision not to go to Bombay, but if you want it to be modified, do tell me by all means. It means that I shall have to remain in a railway compartment for a few hours. You may see me there if necessary but in any case not at the cost of your health. There is nothing we cannot deal with through correspondence. In any case you are coming to Wardha on the 8th. You may come a day earlier if you like.

If postmen are using high-handed methods, it is quite proper to raise our voice against it.

[This was sent to New Delhi.]

The Sardar's reply

68 Marine Drive
Bombay
August 2, 1946

. . . It will be better if you go direct to Wardha without coming to Bombay. I shall start from here by the evening mail on the 6th, arriving there on the morning of the 7th.

I cannot come earlier because Sikhs from the Punjab are to come here and I have to meet them on the fifth.

I am not negotiating with Ambedkar out of fear of the Musalmans. I think it would be wise to give him something which even pro-Congress Harijans are going to demand at a later date and thus win him over. . . . . The question of trusting him is not so important. If he does not keep his word, he will only hurt himself. He does not get any special advantage if only such candidates are considered to have been validly elected as get 20 % of the Harijan vote. The newspaper reports about his conversion do not emanate from him. After all similar proposals are sure to come up in the Constituent Assembly. The Sapru report has also made such recommendations. I can see no risk in it. I did not understand what you want to say.

Caste Hindus are of course at fault. This does not come in the way of anything we might do to correct it. There is a large population of Mahars in Bombay province and he is certainly their representative. He does not get anything out of concessions granted to Harijans elsewhere. Do think over it.

The postal strike has been called off.

CCLV

Uruli-Kanchan,
August 2, 1946

Radhakrishna writes to say that one worker in his mill has been stabbed by the strikers and others have been beaten up. I wrote to Abid Ali about this complaint and enclose a copy of the letter. If this violence continues, the millowner cannot but close down his mill and take steps to prevent miscreants from setting fire or otherwise causing damage to the mill.

[This and the following two letters were sent to Bombay.]

The enclosed letter to Abid Ali

Bhai Khaitan came and saw me on the 31st. I advised him that if he had anything to complain of, he should put it before an arbitrator, who should also receive complaints from Bhai Bhimji or Bhai Abid Ali. This is the way of civilised justice.

A Satyagrahi strike or any other form of Satyagraha can only be undertaken when all normal avenues of securing justice are closed and dictatorship has taken the place of justice.

I received today a letter from Khaitanji saying that strikers had wounded a head clerk and injured a number of workers. Also that the strikers have not yet returned to work.

If this did happen, it is not a good thing. As those on strike are under your control it is your duty to see that they do not indulge in such excesses. However if you have anything to say, I would advise you to see Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

CCLVI

Uruli
August 3, 1946

If you see no risk in it, I should have nothing to say. Do draw up an agreement with Bhimrao.

I look forward to your coming here on the seventh. . .

CCLVII

Sevagram
August 16, 1946

. . . If you preserve your health, I would regard it as a part of your service to the nation. But you are our Sardar [Chief]; so who can order you about?

CCLVIII

Valmiki Mandir
Slip New Delhi
Monday, September 2, 1946

*You have been in my thoughts since the morning prayers. Abolish the salt-tax; remember the Dandi march, unite Hindus and Muslims, remove untouchability and make Khadi your own.

CCLIX

Slip written in New Delhi on October 10, 1946

The proposal [that I should broadcast to the nation] is worthless. The really poor never can listen to the radio; so I am not at all enthusiastic about it.

* Gandhiji's 'order of the day' read out to them when Sardar Vallabhbhai and other ministers went to see him before the swearing-in of the Interim Government.

CCLX

Sodepur
November 5, 1946

Please go through the enclosed copy of my letter to Jawaharlal. I have nothing to add to it. If you have any reasons why I should not take the step, do let me know. This fast is not like previous ones of which you were a witness, but there is not much of a difference. I have not passed through any less severe agonies.

Please share this with Rajaji, Devadas, Maulana Saheb and others.

No one should rush to Calcutta to be by my side. There are many here to look after me. I can continue to live only if there is absolute peace in India. You will of course do all you can in that direction. Do not lay any stress on the prediction regarding my death, but say that if I have made a mistake there cannot be any harm in letting me die. I am happy.

Enclosure

Calcutta
November 5, 1946

Bad news from Bihar has made me uneasy. My duty is quite clear to me. My connections with Bihar are very intimate. Even if half of what I hear is a fact, one can see that Bihar has lost its humanity. It would be quite untrue to say that whatever was done was done by hooligans. It was not possible for me to abandon this fast even after I had tried my utmost. This is the seventh day since I stopped taking milk and cereals. This partial fast was started because of cough and slight eruptions on the skin, but at the same time I was tired of life.

Meanwhile the situation in Bihar became very serious. And a voice from within asked me: 'Why should you be a helpless witness of this massacre? If no one listens to what you say even if it is as clear as daylight, your work is finished. Then why not die?' These arguments irresistibly led me towards a fast unto death. I want to issue a public statement that if the killings in Bihar and other provinces are not stopped, I shall be compelled to fast unto death. . . .

In the meantime my reduced diet will continue. A fast unto death will probably be delayed. In Delhi you once asked me about fasting. I told you, "I have no such idea at present." But conditions have now changed. However you may tell me anything that you would like to urge. If it impresses me, I shall give up the idea of a fast unto death. I think that you will approve of the action I propose to take because you know what sort of man I am. Whatever happens, my advice will always be that all of you should go on doing your own work. You should not spend a single moment on speculations about my death. You should discard anxiety and leave me in the hands of God.

You may show this letter to the Bihar ministry. Can this be the same Bihar as Vrajkishorprasad's?

[This and all the following letters were sent to New Delhi.]

CCLXI

Dattapara
(Noakhali)
November 14, 1946

I began with Chi.; so let it be. You are to me what you are. . . . Acharya [Kripalani] told me everything. I have informed Jawaharlal about my views and you

should also take note of them. The more I think about it, the more I find myself against holding the Congress in Merath. It is wisest not to have a session, but if you do have it, have it in New Delhi. Kripalani being the elected president for the year, it is our duty to let him take the final decision, though every one should state his own view. His address must be printed and read if the session is called off. You have many questions before you. You need peace to be able to solve them; you need time as well. If a mistake is made now, it will prove to be very costly.

I simply cannot leave this place. If there is something about which I must be consulted, some one should come here and ask me. That is the only way out. Really speaking, there should be no need to ask me questions, as I have said much as well as done much. This Noakhali chapter may perhaps be my last. If I survive this, it will be a new birth for me. My non-violence is being tested here in a way it has never been tested before.

CCLXII

Shrirampur
December 4, 1946

I enclose a statement of my views about the Constituent Assembly. Please go through it and do what you think fit. Jawaharlal's absence is a great handicap. I hold very strong views in the matter. There is certainly no weakness on our part in rejecting the Constituent Assembly. Doing what the situation demands is no weakness. But may be I am quite wrong.

Enclosures

(1)

I am quite clear that if there is a boycott by the Muslim League of the Constituent Assembly, it should not meet under the Cabinet Mission's statement of 16th May. It clearly contemplates the co-operation of the major parties, viz. the Congress and the League. Therefore, if one of them proclaims a boycott, the Constituent Assembly cannot with propriety meet under that paper. If the Government convene the Constituent Assembly in spite of the boycott, they can legitimately do so only under some other statement which they can draw up in consultation with the Congress. It should never be forgotten that however powerful the Congress has become, a Constituent Assembly as contemplated today can only meet by action of the British Government.

2. Even if the Constituent Assembly meets in spite of the boycott but with the willing co-operation of the British Government, it will be under the visible or invisible protection of the British forces, whether Indian or European. In my opinion, we shall never reach a satisfactory constitution under these circumstances. Whether we own it or not, our weakness will be felt by the whole world.

3. It may be said that not to meet as a Constituent Assembly under these circumstances will amount to a surrender to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah or the Muslim League. I do not mind the charge because the waiver will not be an act of weakness; it would be one of

Congress strength because it would be due to the logic of facts. If we have attained a certain degree of status and strength to warrant us in convening our own Constituent Assembly irrespective of the British Government, it will be a proper thing. We will have then to seek the co-operation of the Muslim League and all the parties including the princes, and the Constituent Assembly can meet at a favourable place even if some do not join. Thus it may be only the Congress provinces plus princes who may care to join. I think this would be dignified and wholly consistent with facts.

(2)

In view of the statement issued by H. M. Government, I am inclined to adopt some such policy as outlined below:

The position of His Majesty's Government is that they have always stated it to be their intention that voting in the Sections should, in the absence of an agreement to the contrary, be taken by a simple majority vote of the representatives in the Sections. They suggest that if the Congress does not agree to this interpretation, the matter should go to the Federal Court for decision. The British Government have promised Mr Jinnah in the presence of Pandit Nehru that if the decision of the Federal Court is different from their own interpretation, they will reconsider the entire position.

The second thing suggested by His Majesty's Government is that either the Congress must accept their interpretation now, or it should go to the Federal Court before the Constituent Assembly divides up into Sections. The intention behind this obviously is that the Muslim League would decide whether it would take part in the work of the Assembly or not only after this

issue has been settled. I for one would not accept this suggestion. The stand taken by the Congress is that the Constituent Assembly should not be converted into a wrestling ring. It should try as far as possible to reach unanimous decisions on debatable matters. This is a very important point. Before any party decides to take its case before the Federal Court, it should discuss it in the meetings of the Sections and exhaust all possible ways of arriving at an agreement. On the other hand the position of the Muslim League is that it has rejected the plan in the Cabinet Mission's *statement of May 16. Therefore the Muslim League Council must first modify its resolution rejecting the Government plan and must agree to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed by the Mission.

As regards the last paragraph of the Statement issued by the British Government, we should definitely point out that Mr Attlee has clearly stated that minorities will not be allowed to veto the over-all progress of the country. The British Government is now trying to wriggle out of that promise. The Congress has compromised on many of its basic principles in order to preserve the unity of the country. If in spite of all reasonable assurances given by the Congress, the British Government is not ready to agree that the Constitution would be applicable to the whole of India, it can only mean that they accept the right claimed by the Muslim League to establish a separate state. For provinces with Muslim majorities have the right to opt out by expressing their dissatisfaction with the constitution now to be framed. The assurances given in the statements issued by His Majesty's Government on May 16 and May 25 are all nullified by this. On the contrary the Muslim League

* See Appendix.

is given a clear assurance that if they leave the Assembly, they will get Pakistan. This does not of course apply to any province which has been compelled to join any Group by the brute majority in the Section meeting.

CCLXIII

Shrirampur
December 25, 1946

Your letter to Pyarelal reached me direct yesterday. Pyarelal and all the rest are engrossed in their own work and are staking their lives. . . . So Pyarelal does not know about this letter. He comes to see me occasionally and will read it when he comes here next.

I am dictating this at 3 a. m. I shall have a wash at 4 a. m. and prayers after that. This is the present routine. I shall carry on only if such is God's will. However there is nothing in my health which should make you anxious. The body responds to the demands made upon it, but it is a real ordeal for me. My truth and non-violence are being weighed in a balance which is much more accurate than any a pearl merchant ever used. It is so sensitive as to register the difference of even the hundredth fraction of a hair. They in themselves can never be found wanting. If anything is to be found wanting, it may be I who have constituted myself their representative; if so, I at least hope that God will take me away and work through some other worthier agent. I am sorry that I cannot myself do the work which Pyarelal used to do for me and I have not yet been able to prepare the two men who are with me to do it. But both are intelligent. I therefore hope to be able to arrange it. In this your letter will afford me encouragement. Jaisukhlal left Manu at her own wish three or

four days ago. I allowed her to come, as she was prepared to stay and die with me if necessary. And now I am dictating this to her, lying down with my eyes closed so as to reduce my exertion to the minimum. Sucheta [Kripalani] is also in this room. She is still asleep. . . .

The telegram you sent me is fit only to be thrown into the waste-paper basket. There is no limit to exaggeration here. Not that the people exaggerate intentionally; they simply do not know what exaggeration means. The imagination of the people runs riot like the local vegetation which presses in on all sides. All around us I find huge coconut and betelnut palms, and a large variety of greens grow in their shade. The rivers are all like the Sindhu, the Ganga, the Yamuna and the Brahmaputra. These empty their waters in the Bay of Bengal. My advice is that if you have not replied to him already you should ask the man who sent the telegram to you to furnish proof for his statements so that 'the Central Government may try to do something about it, though they have no power to interfere in terms of the Constitution.' And add : 'Gandhi is there in your midst and it is impossible that he would not hear you. But he is an apostle of truth and non-violence and therefore there is a possibility of his disappointing you. But if he disappoints you, how can we, who were trained under him, hope to satisfy you? But we shall do what we can.' Don't tell any one that since Gandhi is there, he need not bring his problems to you. Let him write to you as well, and it would be your duty to afford relief to him even by going against me, for that is what I have taught you. The situation is difficult. Truth is nowhere to be found. Violence masquerades as non-violence,

irreligion as religion. But truth and non-violence can be tested only in such conditions, I know; that is why I am here. Do not call me away. If I ran away in fear, that would be my own misfortune; but India is certainly not so unlucky. I am here to do or die. News came over the radio yesterday that Jawaharlal, Kripalani and Deo were coming to have consultations with me. That is enough. What is the use of my meeting every one? However, if any one among you wants to ask me anything, he can.

What I wrote about Assam was not meant for immediate publication. But rest assured that I am right on that point.

You will have seen the report of the Bihar [Muslim] League. I wrote to Rajendrababu about it and have asked him to acquaint all of you with my views. I have also written to the Bihar Chief Minister. Even if half of what the report says is correct, it is bad business. I have no doubt that an impartial commission of inquiry with which no one can find any fault ought to be set up without a single day's delay. Whatever is correct in the allegations must be admitted straightaway and the rest should be referred to the commission. You should also discuss this with your Muslim League colleagues in the Cabinet. I am still in correspondence with Suhrawardy. When it is completed I shall send it all to you. Jawaharlal will see what has passed between us so far.

If you are not doing it already, please read the summary of my post-prayer speeches which is sent to the newspapers. Or go through the cuttings which Mani could give you. I know the high pressure under which you are working, but some things have to be done in spite of this pressure. To keep abreast of what I am saying is one of them.

I do not think I can hope that your health is excellent, but trust that it is good enough for you to work. I think it can be very much improved. I would still ask you to call Dinshah [Mehta] in for treatment. I have no doubt that he is a good and sincere man with a benevolent outlook on life. What if he is not so efficient? You ask about Sushila. I cannot say she is in good health. She is at her post in inhospitable villages and is doing good work. Even a quack is a rarity in these parts; so naturally the people make much of some one like her. Therefore do not be anxious about any of us here. And when every one of them is here to die, their falling ill should not be of great concern. If they die, it would be a matter for congratulation. For this they have to die in purity.

CCLXIV

Shrirampur
December 26, 1946

This I am dictating to let you know about a person called Dr Filchner about whom Dinshahji wrote me. I just cannot cope with the work. Something or other always remains in arrears. So I do not know what is going to happen to me. Whatever does happen will be here. I am very happy. Even if there is total darkness before me I remain cheerful and consider my health to be excellent. Have no worry on my account. If the person whom Dinshahji recommends can be allowed to remain he should, in my opinion, be granted the permission. That of course, only if you can let him stay consistently with your duty to the state. Not knowing the facts, I cannot say any more.

Do be careful about your health.

CCLXV

Shrirampur
December 30, 1946
5:15 A. M.

I have received your letter. Jawahar and others will be able to tell you about what happened here.

I hold strong views about X. The work being done here cannot be carried on with the Congress funds or funds collected by you. Money should be publicly collected both from Hindus and Muslims. I am also getting more convinced by experience that all activities run on money alone are sure to fall through. You also should give up any idea of getting things done with money. It is essential that X should not deviate even an inch from what is agreed to between him and me. I am firmly determined that I will get out of it as soon as I see even the slightest impurity. This work is most delicate and the biggest that has come to my lot. God has sustained me so far. I awake and start working at 1:30 a. m. standard time and there has been no difficulty yet. Only God knows about tomorrow.

I heard of many complaints against you. If there is any exaggeration in "many", it is unintended. Your speeches tend to be inflammatory and play to the gallery. You have lost sight of all distinction between violence and non-violence. You are teaching the people to meet violence with violence. You miss no opportunity to insult the Muslim League in season and out of season. If all this is true it is very harmful. They say you talk about holding on to office; that also is disturbing. Whatever I heard I have passed on to you for consideration. The times are very critical. If we stray from the strait

and narrow path by ever so little, we are done for. The Working Committee does not function harmoniously as it should. Root out corruption; you know how to do it. If you feel like it, send some sensible and reliable person to explain things to me and understand my point of view. There is no need whatever for you to come. You are no longer fit to run about. You do not seem to take any care of your health; that is bad.

I will not write any further. It is now 5:35 Calcutta time, and there are heaps of arrears to be disposed of.

The Sardar's Reply

Your letter pained me. Naturally you have written only on the basis of the reports you received and the complaints you heard. The complaints are false of course and some of them do not even make sense.

The charge that I want to stick to office is a fabrication. Jawaharlal now and then hurls idle threats of resigning from the Interim Government. I objected to it, as it only lowers the prestige of the Congress and demoralizes the services. We must first make up our mind to resign. Repetition of empty threats has only resulted in the loss of face before the Viceroy, and he no longer takes it seriously. It took me not a moment to offer my resignation when the Viceroy demanded the surrender of my portfolio. It was no bluff and thus had a salutary effect. I have nothing to gain by sticking to office. I am bed-ridden and would only be too glad to be a free man once more. Therefore I cannot understand how you could entertain such a complaint. Not even any Leaguer has said that I insult the League time and again.

It is news to me that my speeches are made with an eye to the gallery. In fact it is my habit to tell people

very unpalatable truths. At the time of the naval mutiny I condemned the disturbances unsparingly although it displeased many at the time and Jawaharlal came there to keep the socialists pleased in spite of my advice to the contrary.

The remark regarding meeting violence with violence has been torn out of a long passage and presented out of context.

The lack of unity in the Working Committee is nothing recent. It is an old phenomenon, but for the present at any rate every one is generally careful to act in harmony with others.

I would certainly like to know if any of my colleagues has complained to you about me. None of them has said anything to me.

Confidential reports which the Government of Bengal and the Governor are sending regarding your continued stay in Bengal are very bad. They wish to push you out from there.

CCLXVI

Chandipur
January 6, 1947

Your health worries me. You must get better. There is so much work to do.

The situation is very delicate. Do observe whatever goes on here. I am wandering in complete darkness but my hope burns as bright as ever.

I enclose a letter for X. If one regards money as the supreme good, he is sure to forget the Supreme Being.

I forget to write so many things whenever I sit down to write to you at the last moment; and I cannot

be ready to write till then. So Sudhir will give you the rest of the news.

Enclosure

My dear X,

I am very certain that the work here cannot be done with money. I do not want even a pie from the Congress. I want to work with what funds are collected in Johar and would work even if there was no response at all. There is no other way of doing real service.

CCLXVII

Shahpur
January 14, 1947

. . . Now about the proposed Bihar Commission of Inquiry.

Is it not sufficient to stop the Chief Minister that you are yourself against a Commission as well as the Governor and the Viceroy? In spite of all this, I am strongly of opinion that if no commission is appointed, the League's report about the ill-treatment of Muslims will be regarded as based on facts beyond dispute. I should know about what pressure is being put on me, should not I? . . .

CCLXVIII

Dalta
January 24, 1947

I have both your letters. I am dictating this while spinning. A messenger has come and I must send this with him. I do not get any information about what happens in other parts of the country. I heard about Hazara [riots]; so I telegraphed. The work here takes up all my time. It is no easy matter to shift one's

residence from day to day. God has somehow sustained me so far. We have yet to see what He does after this. Venom is widespread and non-violence has to make its way through it. That is the only way in which it can be put to the test. . . .

I was glad to learn that your health is somewhat better and that you have called in a naturopath. In my view, nature cure is the only thing for you. . . .

Parashuram the typist is gone. But I do not need any substitute.

CCLXIX

February 1, 1947

These two friends have told me the tale of their woes. I cannot do anything for them. If what they say is correct, it is a painful matter. They asked for an introduction to you; so I am giving this to them.

I hope you are well.

CCLXX

Amishapara
February 4, 1947

[Maurice] Frydman is the same as Bharatanand; please see if you can make him an Indian national.

I want you not to be unhappy, and to leave me in the hands of God.

CCLXXI

Shrinagar (Bengal)
February 5, 1947

. . . I made a long speech about the League. You have perhaps read it in the newspapers. It summarizes my views on the subject.

I take the Cabinet Mission statement to mean that there is nothing to fear if even the princes do not join the Constituent Assembly. Nothing is lost even if they do not interpret it in the same way. And if they do, it will only show them in a better light, and we shall be able to get to work directly. It is as clear as daylight to me that there is no need to experience shortages in food and cloth. It is another matter if I cannot convince others about it. In such a position it does not make much difference whether I come there or do not. My place is here only. I am satisfied with what I can do here. I believe that I bring some slight happiness to the people here, and I may be able to do more if I continue to function. But that is in the hands of Providence.

I hear that your opposition is reported to be the reason why the Bihar Ministry does not appoint an inquiry commission. I do not believe it, but I should bring it to your notice. If a commission is not appointed, much damage will be done. The Ministry will be regarded as guilty. If their work has been above board, what harm can the Commission do to them? Considerable pressure is being exerted on me, but I did not go because I reposed confidence in the Ministers. But if a Commission is not appointed after all, it seems to me that I shall have to go to Bihar.

I hope you are taking sufficient care of your health.

The Sardar's Reply

Who told you that I was responsible for the non-appointment of a Commission in Bihar? I think that there is nothing to be gained by appointing it and that there will be some harm on the other hand. But if it is to be appointed, how can I stand in their way? It is surprising to see that all these false stories come to

you. Why do not those who tell them to you come to me? Such persons who talk behind people's backs must be exposed.

The Bihar Governor is responsible for the non-appointment. The Viceroy also would not like it to be instituted. Otherwise who can prevent it? The Calcutta Commission was appointed at the instance of the Viceroy. They are still making inquiries. It will be twelve months before they report. What use will the report be after such a long period? Only the money spent on it will be wasted. I cannot see the reason why the odium should be placed on me.

CCLXXII

On the steamer from Chandpur
March 3, 1947

I got your letter yesterday in Chandpur. I do not like your ailment getting worse. It was possible to check it in the past and it may be so still. If you do not think much of Dinshah, I have other naturopaths in view. But who can persuade you? You would do as you like. Do you know how many people are dependent on you?

I may perhaps not be able to prove the necessity of my work here, but I feel sure that it is fundamental.

I leave today for Bihar. There was a letter from X and now another from Dr Mahmud. Both are shocking; so I am going. You stalwarts are all there and working. In these parts I am something of a leader in the absence of others. So let me be here. If anything is accomplished, it will be of use to the country. If nothing can be done, there will be nothing to lose. . . .

I was sad to hear about Dr Kanuga's illness. Let us be content in such condition as God chooses to keep us.

CCLXXIII

Patna
March 17, 1947

Please read the enclosed papers about the Pole and do what you think fit. I am sorry to have to put you to all this trouble but I cannot help it. However, if you cannot read them, please forget about it and return the papers. If you do anything about it, you need not send them back.

[Kedar] Nathji and Swami [Anand] have been here. We talked in great detail and they will write to you about it. Sushila writes that you are not keeping good health; so please be careful.

CCLXXIV

Patna
March 22, 1947

If you can, please explain your resolution about the Punjab* to me. I can make out nothing from it.

I trust you are well.

CCLXXV

In the train
April 13, 1947

I forgot to find out one thing from you as I just did not have the time. I now see that I must write something about it in *Harijan*. . . . I also notice that there are frequent differences between your and my approach to political problems. Such being the case, would it be

* A resolution to be moved in the Working Committee deploring the riots in the Punjab and recommending its division into two parts.

advisable for me to meet the Viceroy even as an individual?

Please consider this impartially, keeping the good of the country only in view. If you like, you may discuss it with others. You should not see the slightest suggestion of a complaint from me here. I am thinking of my duty in terms of national well-being. It is quite possible that what you can see in administering the affairs of millions may not be realized by me. If I were in your place, I would probably be saying and doing exactly as all of you are saying and doing.

CCLXXVI

Patna
April 24, 1947

There is a telegram from Jawaharlal that I should go to Delhi in early May. Therefore I propose to start from here on the 27th, arriving there on the morning of the 3rd. I will have the same people with me, and stay as usual in the Bhangi Colony. Please inform Ghanshyamdas [Birla], Maulana [Azad] and others.

I received your telegram about *Harijan*. I am now preparing to write the article. I wrote to Kishorlal and Jivanji. Meetings of the Charkha Sangh and Talimi Sangh are being held at present.

CCLXXVII

Patna
May 17, 1947

I got your and Jawaharlal's letters. I feel no enthusiasm at all to go to Mussoorie. You should stay in Mussoorie as long as you can. Whatever days I can get here will be spent usefully; so if you agree, I shall reach

Delhi on the 31st; or any time after that as you wish. I would like you to take complete rest in Mussoorie. Talks we shall have in Delhi.

I read about Darbar Gopaldas in the newspapers. I was sure about it [restitution of his estate to him]. There was a telegram from him today; so I wrote to him.

CCLXXVIII

Valmiki Mandir
New Delhi
June 23, 1947

Today's news is quite unbelievable. Just look at the Reuter cable. There will be two nations in the bill! Then what are the big talks we are having here worth? If this is not a matter agreed to by you, you people can prevent this crime. Once the bill is passed, no one will listen to you.

In my opinion ——'s speech was quite bad. That he spoke in fun does not reduce the gravity of the matter. I feel he could be made to resign if there was any other fault in him. It would be hard to dismiss him entirely on this ground.

I have also written to Jawaharlal about this.

CCLXXIX

New Delhi
July 18, 1947

I enclose Akbar's letter. I find it quite reasonable. He has written to you also. Do let me know what you think about it. If you just do not have the time, leave it to be dealt with by me.

CCLXXX

New Delhi
July 24, 1947

As I go on thinking, I feel more and more that I should leave here as soon as the Kashmir affair is settled. I do not like much of what is being done. I do not say that you should therefore alter your course; but I do say that I should not appear to be associated with it. Further I must reach Bihar and thence Noakhali before the 15th. That too is urgent work; so I would only ask you not to detain me any more. In any case there will be four or five days still.

I think that the publication of *Harijan* should now be stopped. I do not feel like leading the country in an opposite direction. Please think over all these things at your leisure.

CCLXXXI

New Delhi
July 26, 1947

Two Khaksars came to see me yesterday. One of them wept bitterly. He said that an official had assured them nothing further would happen as they were going away. Yet the same evening there was firing in the mosque and many were killed. An old man of seventy was hit by seven bullets. It is not known how many of the casualties died and how many were alive. The mosque was surrounded and the Khaksars went hungry and thirsty for three days and could not even go out

to relieve nature. I was staggered to hear all this. I rebuked them and told them that they could not possibly be right and I repeated what you had told me the same day: "They refused to leave the mosque in spite of many requests, and at last police officials entered the mosque with permission from the Imam [custodian of the mosque] and action was taken according to the wishes of the Muslim in charge. No force was used. Nothing beyond tear-gas was used and no one was killed." And I told them that I could not believe in their story. Their reply was: "If your own Sardar says something, nothing different that we can say will hold. The Khaksars are dead and gone. What is the use of seeking justice now? But one day you will know. Truth can never be suppressed." I replied that if I knew of any wrong being done, I would not suppress it even for my nearest and dearest; that I had nothing more to say and that I would do my duty.

Please let me know if there is anything in this.

CCLXXXII

New Delhi
July 28, 1947

Jawaharlal told me last night that you might approve of his going to Kashmir but not mine; he has, therefore, left me free to do as I like. Therefore I propose to leave tomorrow for Lahore. Lahore and Amritsar on the 30th, Rawalpindi on the 31st. I may stay there for a day and then take the train for Patna. If this is all right, please endorse it, so that I might get ready to go. Some arrangements will also have to be made by you, won't they?

My note to the Viceroy is being sent immediately.

CCLXXXIII

Slip

New Delhi
July 28, 1947

I have already written that I do not want to go to Kashmir, but Jawaharlal will instead. I have now a letter from the Viceroy in which he says that I should go but not Jawaharlal. I cannot reach any decision; what shall we do?

CCLXXXIV

Lahore
August 6, 1947

I am giving this note to the Khaksar gentlemen who had met me there. They now complain of further injustice. They kept their luggage in a hotel and came to see me. The police took away their luggage during their absence. I told them I could do no more than write to you. He said no one would otherwise listen to them and therefore asked me to give them a letter of recommendation so that some one might give them a patient hearing. I do not want you to meet them. It should be enough if you ask some official to hear their complaint.

Please send me a reply to my earlier letter on this subject.

Part of the Sardar's reply

These Khaksars have unnecessarily been bothering you. You wrote to me on July 26 in Delhi that the Khaksars told you about firing in a Delhi mosque. I then told you in person what had actually happened. There was

no firing and no Khaksar has died in Delhi of bullet wounds. A number of Khaksars had shut themselves up in the mosque and were plotting to stage demonstrations during the celebrations on August 15, 1947. They were planning to prevent the hoisting of the Congress flag and to create a disturbance. Therefore a Musalman Commissioner used tear-gas in the mosque and arrested them. That is all. Some Khaksars arrived today from Lahore with the note given by you. Their complaint is also baseless. I have sent them to the Commissioner. The Khaksars want Delhi and Agra to be included in Pakistan, they want Ajmer also. For this they want to make Delhi a base of operations. The Commissioner does not want them to remain in Delhi; so they hide themselves in mosques. No local Musalman here supports them.

CCLXXXV

Lahore
August 6, 1947

I am sending a note to Jawaharlal. He will give it to you to read.

Kak has written a letter to the Maharaja. He will send a copy to you. He gave it to me to read. There is great sweetness in his words at any rate. I spoke with the Maharaja and the Maharani for one hour. He agreed that only what the subjects desire should be done, but said nothing about his next move. He therefore sent his private secretary to express his regrets. The thing is he wants to get rid of Kak. He is now only considering how. Sir Jailal was almost sure to succeed Kak. You should do something in the matter. In my opinion the situation in Kashmir can be improved.

A fair amount of work was done in the Wah Camp. The people ought not to be removed from there. This matter should be discussed by you with the Pakistan Government. Hindus and Sikhs should be rehabilitated in Rawalpindi. Please have a look at the speeches I made in the refugee camps at Panja Saheb and Wah. I have made this suggestion there.

I am staying with Rameshvari Nehru here and shall leave by the Calcutta Mail this evening. I shall stop in Patna for a day and then go to Calcutta and Noakhali.

As it was found to be necessary, I have left Sushila [Nayyar] behind in the Camp. The people liked this arrangement very much. They are in a great panic but I see no reason for it.

I hope you are looking after your health.

CCLXXXVI

Calcutta
August 13, 1947

I am stuck here and am going to take a big risk now. Suhrawardy and I are going to stay together in a disturbed area today. Wait and see.

Kak seems to have left [Kashmir].

I had also written to Sharatbabu about [demonstrations against] Rajaji, just as you did, but have not heard from him so far. Also he has not yet been to me this time. . . .

I quite understand about the Khaksars. I acted, seeing it as my duty, so that they should have nothing to say against us, and I deal with others also in the same manner.

The work before us is difficult and the difficulty seems to be increasing. What shall we do if the rains fail? Many may die of starvation in that case, may they not?

The problem of the States is so difficult that you alone can solve it. But who will solve the problem of your health?

CCLXXXVII

Calcutta
August 17, 1947

My ears have become deaf with all this shouting. I am expected not to get tired of giving *darshan*. I cannot see at all how I can free myself from this. The rest of the news you will get from newspapers.

I am reminded of the days of the Khilafat agitation in 1920-21. But what if this turns out to be only momentary enthusiasm?

I enclose a telegram from [Hindu refugees in] Lahore. I have sent no reply. If the facts as stated [about mass massacres, arson etc.] are correct it is very distressing indeed. Do let me know the facts. I am held up here for the present. The second enclosure is a letter from Horace Alexander. I really like what he suggests. If he makes recommendations after an on-the-spot study, any injustice that might be done could be prevented.

Some agitators in Chandranagar have surrounded the house of the Administrator; so Praphullababu has gone there.

CCLXXXVIII

Calcutta
August 26, 1947

I have your letter. It is distressing to read. However you did everything you could have done. I did leave Sushila in the jaws of death. Now she can come away only if the refugees in Wah are out of danger; otherwise let her die with them. . . .

Whatever is going to happen in the Punjab? The enclosed letter only came today. Could all that it contains be true? I am being strongly pressed to go to the Punjab. I do not know what to do. Jawaharlal also writes to me that I should go but not just now. I propose to be here until Sunday, and then go to Noakhali and from there to Bihar. This would easily take a fortnight. I do not understand what I could do if I came to Delhi. I am afraid I would only come in the way of the work you all are doing.

Kripalani asks if he could resign now. When talking to all of you about this, I understood that he might take that step after the 15th. None of you has a high opinion of him. If his seniors have no confidence in him it seems best that he should be allowed to go. It is also worth while considering now who should be appointed in his place. The present situation seems dangerous to me. What danger I might see from here may not be felt by you who are in the midst of it. I can see that my place is in these parts. I would also like to have an idea of the Punjab situation. But I doubt whether any one would want me to go there.

The Hyderabad affair is beset with difficulties but you are sure to find a way out.

The Sardar's letter referred to above

When you left Sushila [in Wah], it became another cause for anxiety. A special military man brought her letter today and I send it to you.

. . . The situation in the Punjab has considerably deteriorated. The people have gone quite mad and they set fire to cities and villages and cut up people as if they were melons. There are also reports of the army personnel and the police having made common cause with the rioters. People are fleeing in thousands and spread panic wherever they go. We have to work very hard to prevent the repercussions of events in the Punjab elsewhere. Day after day people running away from the Punjab come into Delhi and they keep us busy day and night. They come full of sorrow and fear and it is difficult to pacify them.

The scarcity of foodgrains is also a difficult problem. Those who have a surplus refuse to part with it. Prakasam and Ranga are inciting the people to refuse to sell rice. Congress workers are busy with the struggle for power and create any number of difficulties. . . .

Part of the Sardar's reply to this letter

I am afraid you could not do anything in the Punjab if you went there. You will not be able to put out the conflagration. Hindus, Sikhs and Musalmans cannot stay there together. Hindus might possibly live there some time in the future but not now. It is however impossible to imagine Sikhs living with Musalmans even in the remote future. The virus has infected the army as well. People in hundreds of thousands are fleeing

in both directions and the camps are in a constant state of panic. Even those who are running away are massacred. There are no sufficient arrangements for removing them in safety. . . .

CCLXXXIX

Baliaghat
August 30, 1947

May God give all of you the strength and the wisdom the situation demands. Who ever thought that you would have at once to face so difficult a situation? His will be done.

Horace Alexander is with me.

The above is in reply to the following letter from the Sardar.

All arrangements about Sushila have been made; so there is nothing to be anxious either about her or her camp. But the Punjab is still out of control.

There was a good meeting in Lahore yesterday. Jinnah and other Leaguers were there and all resolutions were passed unanimously. However it will take some time to extinguish the fire which has spread so widely.

Jawaharlal and Liaquat Ali have gone on a joint tour of the Punjab from today. Others are also moving among the people and much hard work is being done. Success is in the hands of God. . . .

The Hyderabad sore is still running. We are working hard at a cure but it will take time. Junagadh also is giving trouble but it will not be long before it is quiet. The Indore problem is solved. The Britishers there have been replaced by an Indian. I have appointed N. C.

Mehta for the present. Competent men are very few and it is difficult to secure their services.

I shall go to Jalandhar tomorrow. Relief work on a large scale is to be arranged there. . . .

CCXC

Calcutta
September 1, 1947

I received your letter. Bhopal's letter is peculiar. I did not like it. Your work is very hard. May God grant you the necessary strength. If Bhopal plays a straightforward game, Hyderabad's problem will be easy to solve. And the same is true of Pakistan.

I have already sent you my programme but now it is as good as cancelled. We were to go to Noakhali tomorrow morning. So Shahidsahib went home. I am the only elder in the house. Dinshah Mehta is here but he cannot do much as he does not know the language.

Some one received knife wounds in Machhva Bazar. No one knew who stabbed him. People brought him here for exhibition. Perhaps they wanted to assault Shahid Suhrawardy but they could not find him; so their anger was turned on me. There was noise in the front yard. Both the girls [Abha Gandhi and Manu Gandhi] went out among the crowd. I was in bed, about to go to sleep. Our Muslim landlady came in to have a look as she was afraid I might come to harm. I also became alert and got up. I broke my silence. I got into the scuffle and the girls would not leave my side. Other people also surrounded me. Glass windows were broken and they started smashing the doors also. There was an attempt to cut the wires of the electric ceiling fans but only a few were snapped. I started shouting to make

them quiet. But who would listen? Again I could speak only Hindustani and these were Bengalis. There were also some Musalmans near by. I asked them not to strike back. So they only stood around me. There were two groups; one for inflaming anger, the other for turning it away. There were two men from the police also. They also remained passive. I folded my hands and raised my voice. They stopped me. Kalyanam suggested that I should go and sit inside. Bisen was in the centre. He was only in pyjama and was taken for a Muslim. Bricks were thrown. One hit a Muslim. No one was wounded, but that brick would have struck me. The Superintendent of Police came soon after and the youngsters dispersed after causing considerable damage to the house. Praphullababu and Annada arrived. Praphulla suggested the posting of more police guard but I demurred.

Every one suspects the Hindu Mahasabha is involved in this attack. I asked them to see Shyamaprasad and Chaterji before arresting any rioters and not to do anything in a hurry. Such is the position here. I could thus sleep only half an hour after midnight. I had of course to get up at the usual hour.

Please speak to Jawaharlal about this. . . . In the above situation, you must expect me to be only here. As for tomorrow, who can tell?

CCXCI

Calcutta,
September 1, 1947

Today they are here preparing to fight. I just went and saw the dead bodies of two Musalmans who had died of wounds. I hear that riots have broken out in many places. Thus what was regarded as a miracle was

merely a flash in the pan. Now I am thinking what my duty is in the circumstances. I am writing this at about six p. m. As the post will go only tomorrow, I shall be able to add something more. Jawahar wires that I should go to the Punjab. But how can I leave Calcutta now? I am thinking out a solution and the silence is an aid to thought. . . .

September 2, 1947
4:45 a.m.

I received more news since the above was written. Last evening a number of people came to see me. I kept thinking of my own duty. The news that I received clinched the issue for me, and I decided to undertake a fast. It began at 8:15 last evening. Rajaji came in at night. He tried to persuade me not to fast. But none of his arguments appealed to me. I saw my way clear before me. You should not worry nor should any one else. Nothing is gained by worrying. If the leaders are true to themselves, the riots will stop and the fast will be broken. If the riots continue, what is the use of my continuing to live? If I lack even the power to pacify the people, what else is left for me to do? If God wants to make use of me any longer He will enter the people's hearts and bring them to their senses and thus preserve my body. I have started the fast only in His name. . . .

May God keep you all safe. In this holocaust, none else is capable of doing anything.

CCXCII

Birla House
New Delhi
October 6, 1947

Maulana Saheb came and was with me for a short while yesterday evening. He wants the three of us to meet together. The time for the meeting is to be fixed by you. He wants any one hour tomorrow. Please let him and me know the time.

CCXCIII

Birla House
New Delhi
November 1, 1947

You came and saw me yesterday but I did not then remember that it was your birthday. Therefore I could not give you my best wishes on the spot. Such is the sorry plight I am in.

I write this for special reasons:

1. Refugees come in great crowds near the Birla temple. It is not possible for all of them to live there and they huddle together somehow. They must be removed to a camp and that quickly.

2. I enclose a letter about mosques. It is only one of many such. A statement should be issued that all of them would be protected from abuse and whatever damage they might have suffered would be repaired by the Government.

3. It should be announced that those who were forcibly converted to Hinduism or Sikhism would be

regarded by the Government as not having changed their religion and will receive adequate protection.

4. No Muslim will be forced to leave the Union.

5. If any one has been compelled to vacate his house and if it has been illegally occupied by others, such occupation will be regarded as null and void and such houses will be reserved for their respective Muslim owners.

I do think it is necessary to issue such a statement.

CCXCIV

Birla House
December 29, 1947

He met me only yesterday. He said he did not know you were to leave for Jammu. He did not even know the Jamsaheb went with you. He also said that if he had known, he would perhaps have made suggestions or sent a letter. Is this correct?

After meeting Randhawa I felt that it would save your time if I could write to him direct. Would that be in order?

APPENDIX

Statement by the Cabinet Delegation and His Excellency the Viceroy

1. On March 15th last just before the despatch of the Cabinet Delegation to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words:—

"My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision.

* * * *

"I hope that India and her people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that they will find great advantages in doing so.

* * * *

"But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has a right to do so. It will be for us to help to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible."

2. Charged in these historic words we—the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy—have done our utmost to assist the two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of

India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in conference at Simla. There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try and reach a settlement but it ultimately proved impossible to close the remainder of the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new constitution. This statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

3. We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India and an Interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as a new constitution can be brought into being. We have endeavoured to be just to the smaller as well as to the larger sections of the people; and to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field.

4. It is not intended in this statement to review the voluminous evidence that has been submitted to the Mission; but it is right that we should state that it has shown an almost universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League, for the unity of India.

5. This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of a partition of India, since we were greatly impressed

by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu-majority rule.

This feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, and economic or other interests.

6. We therefore examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign State of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas; one in the north-west consisting of the provinces of the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, and British Baluchistan; the other in the north-east consisting of the provinces of Bengal and Assam. The League were prepared to consider adjustment of boundaries at a later stage, but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged. The argument for a separate State of Pakistan was based, first, upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of Government according to their wishes, and secondly, upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which Muslims are in a minority, in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of the six Provinces enumerated above would be very considerable as the following figures* show:—

* All population figures in this statement are from the most recent census taken in 1941.

	Muslim	Non-Muslim
North-Western Area —		
Punjab ...	16,217,242	12,201,577
North-West Frontier Province ...	2,788,797	249,270
Sind ...	3,208,325	1,326,683
Br. Baluchistan ...	438,930	62,701
	22,653,294	13,840,231
	62.07%	37.93%
North-Eastern Area—		
Bengal ...	33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam ...	3,442,479	6,762,254
	36,447,913	34,063,345
	51.69%	48.31%

The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20 million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

These figures show that the setting up of a separate sovereign State of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and of Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominently non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan, can equally in our view be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

7. We therefore considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone might be a possible basis of compromise. Such a Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail the exclusion

from Pakistan of (a) the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Divisions in the Punjab; (b) the whole of Assam except the district of Sylhet; and (c) a large part of Western Bengal, including Calcutta, in which city the Muslims form 23.6 % of the population. We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign State of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.

8. Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a united India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole, and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

9. A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

10. Finally there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan State are separated by some seven hundred miles and the communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan.

11. We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States.

12. This decision does not however blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be a dominating element. To meet this the Congress have put forward a scheme under which provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of Central subjects, such as Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications.

Under this scheme provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could cede to the Centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

13. Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a Central Executive and Legislature in which some Ministers, who dealt with Compulsory subjects, were responsible to the whole of India while other Ministers, who dealt with Optional subjects, would be responsible only to those provinces

which had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the Central Legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their provinces were not concerned were under discussion.

Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other provinces, which did not desire to take the Optional subjects at the Centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

14. Before putting forward our recommendation we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government. This fact has been fully recognised by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure, and it by no means follows that it will be identical for all the States. We have not therefore dealt with the States in the same detail as the provinces of British India in the paragraphs which follow.

15. We now indicate the nature of a solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all parties, and would at the same time be most likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution for All-India.

We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:—

(1) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects: Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Communications; and should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British Indian and States representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.

(3) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces.

(4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

(5) Provinces should be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures, and each Group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common.

(6) The Constitution of the Union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby

any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10-yearly intervals thereafter.

16. It is not our object to lay out the details of a constitution on the above lines, but to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary however for us to make this recommendation as to the broad basis of the future constitution because it became clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that had been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in the setting up of the constitution-making machinery.

17. We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable a new constitution to be worked out.

18. In forming any Assembly to decide a new constitutional structure the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and accurate a representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be by election based on adult franchise; but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to a wholly unacceptable delay in the formulation of the new constitution. The only practicable alternative is to utilise the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the electing bodies. There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. First, the numerical strengths of the Provincial Legislative

Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each Province. Thus, Assam with a population of 10 millions has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members, while Bengal, with a population six times as large, has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given to the minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of the several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the province. Thus the number of seats reserved for Muslims in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48% of the total, although they form 55% of the provincial population. After a most careful consideration of the various methods by which these inequalities might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and most practicable plan would be—

(a) to allot to each province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage.

(b) to divide this provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each province in proportion to their population.

(c) to provide that the representatives allotted to each community in a province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognise only three main communities in India: General, Muslim, and Sikh, the "General" community including all persons who are not Muslims or Sikhs. As the smaller minorities would, upon the population basis, have little

or no representation since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in the Provincial Legislatures, we have made the arrangements set out in paragraph 20 below to give them a full representation upon all matters of special interest to the minorities.

19. (i) We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislature (General, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives by the method of proportional representation with the single transferable vote:—

TABLE OF REPRESENTATION

Section A

Province		General	Muslim	Total
Madras	...	45	4	49
Bombay	...	19	2	21
United Provinces	...	47	8	55
Bihar	...	31	5	36
Central Provinces	...	16	1	17
Orissa	...	9	0	9
	Total	167	20	187

Section B

Province	General	Muslim	Sikh	Total
Punjab ...	8	16	4	28
North-West Frontier Province	0	3	0	3
Sind ...	1	3	0	4
Total ...	9	22	4	35

Section C

Province		General	Muslim	Total
Bengal	...	27	33	60
Assam	...	7	3	10
	Total ...	34	36	70

Total for British India ...	292
Maximum for Indian States ...	93
Total ...	385

Note : In order to represent the Chief Commissioners' Provinces there will be added to Section A the Member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the Member representing Ajmer-Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly, and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council.

To Section B will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.

(ii) It is the intention that the States should be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculations adopted for British India, exceed 93, but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by a Negotiating Committee.

(iii) The representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

(iv) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a Chairman and other officers elected, and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas set up.

Thereafter the provincial representatives will divide up into the three Sections shown under A, B, and C, in the Table of Representation in sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph.

(v) These Sections shall proceed to settle the provincial constitutions for the provinces included in each section, and shall also decide whether any Group constitution shall be set up for those provinces and, if so, with what provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces shall have the power to opt out of the Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below.

(vi) The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the Union Constitution.

(vii) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolutions varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities.

The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which (if any) of the resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(viii) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the new legislature of the province after the first general election under the new constitution.

20. The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation of the interests affected, and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of Fundamental Rights, the clauses for the protection of minorities, and a scheme for the administration of the tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the Provincial, Group, or Union constitution.

21. His Excellency the Viceroy will forthwith request the Provincial Legislatures to proceed with the election of their representatives and the States to set up a Negotiating Committee. It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim period may be as short as possible.

22. It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power.

23. While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an Interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of India. Besides the heavy task of day-to-day administration, there is the grave danger of famine to be countered; there are decisions to be taken in many matters of post-war development which will have a far-reaching effect on India's future; and there are important international conferences in which India has to be

represented. For all these purposes a Government having popular support is necessary. The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end, and hopes soon to form an Interim Government in which all the portfolios including that of War Member will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government, recognising the significance of the changes in the Government of India, will give the fullest measure of co-operation to the Government so formed in the accomplishment of its tasks of administration and in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

24. To the leaders and people of India who now have the opportunity of complete independence we would finally say this. We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon the method of framing the new constitution under which they will live. Despite the labours which we have shared with the Indian parties, and the exercise of much patience and goodwill by all, this has not been possible. We therefore now lay before you proposals which, after listening to all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognise with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation.

We ask you to consider the alternative to acceptance of these proposals. After all the efforts which we and the Indian parties have made together for agreement, we must state that in our view there is small hope of peaceful

settlement by agreement of the Indian parties alone. The alternative would therefore be a grave danger of violence, chaos, and even civil war. The result and duration of such a disturbance cannot be foreseen; but it is certain that it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possibility which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen, and the world as a whole.

We therefore lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be accepted and operated by you in the spirit of accommodation and goodwill in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people.

We hope that the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope in any event that you will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice. Whatever that choice may be, we look forward with you to your ever-increasing prosperity among the great nations of the world, and to a future even more glorious than your past.

New Delhi, 16th May 1946

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